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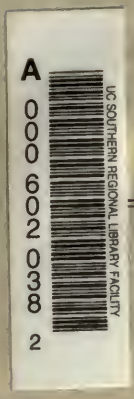

A NARRATIVE

OF THE

EMBARRASSMENTS AND DECLINE

OF

HAMILTON COLLEGE.

By HENRY DAVIS, D.D., President.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Narrative was printed some time since, as may be seen from its date. The reasons which prevented its immediate publication, as was intended, and which have still prevented it until the present time, may be found in the Appendix. (See pp. 121–124.) I must request the reader to bear in mind that all that is contained in the Narrative, pertains to the proceedings of the Board of Trustees and to the state of the College previous to February, 1829, when the Narrative was printed. It is obvious that some of the reasons mentioned in the Introduction, as having at that time induced me to believe it my duty to lay the history of the difficulties under which Hamilton College has labored, with their origin, before the public, no longer exist. The Institution, it is well known, has at length regained its health,—it is restored to public confidence,—and it does not *now* seem necessary, as formerly, to appeal to an impartial and discerning community for the vindication of my official character, or that of my associates, against the multiplied and wide-spread aspersions of which we have been the subjects. For if it is still believed that the incompetency, or unfaithfulness of the faculty, was in any measure a cause of the downfall of the College, it must also be believed, by every candid and well-informed man,—considering its rapid recovery and present state,—that without the agency of other and more efficient causes, that catastrophe could not have been produced.

No man loves peace more than I do; and it must be natural to any one, in retiring from a public station of such cares and responsibilities as the presidency of a college,—and especially at my period of life, threescore years and two,—ardently to wish that the repose of retirement may not be disturbed by controversy.

But notwithstanding these considerations, I am not persuaded, after long and carefully viewing the subject in all its relations, that it is my duty to remain silent.

The undeserved odium heaped upon the faculty by a majority of the Board of Trustees, and others who cherished a similar spirit, has not ceased to be felt. Some there are both here and abroad, as I am fully assured, who have not yet desisted from charging the misfortunes of the College to their incompetency; nor can it now be expected that they will desist from it *willingly*, so long as they have hopes of doing it with success.

A knowledge of the proceedings of the Trustees of this College may prove of use to men, it is confidently believed, in times

like these, who shall be called to preside over the interests of our public seminaries of learning. It may induce them to pause, and to learn the views of their guardians, before they shall consent to take upon themselves such weighty responsibilities. But independent of all private regards, the lessons of experience furnished by the history of Hamilton College, and which have been purchased at so dear a rate, ought not to be lost. The *new measures*, which had their commencement, and which have extensively prevailed in the West, have been intimately connected with its difficulties, though not the origin of them. Many of the facts detailed in the following Narrative cannot but be important to our churches, provided—of which it is thought there can be no doubt—they afford a clear illustration of the practical tendency of these measures. And should it even be believed that other Institutions of learning will derive no benefit from these lessons in this *age of experiment*, yet I am more and more convinced, by almost every day's occurrences, that its own vital interests loudly call for a full and public exposure of the causes of its recent embarrassments and prostration. Such a measure, to superficial observers, I am aware, may now appear unnecessary; and by such, perhaps, it will be asked, *cui bono?* since all seems quiet, and going on prosperously.

But while Hamilton College, as to its advantages in many respects, is unrivalled by any college in our country, and *may* be rendered, under proper direction, a distinguished instrument of good, yet it has its *peculiar dangers*, as well as advantages. It is situated in a region of no common character; distinguished by its activity, its rapid increase in numbers, and its prosperity; but not less distinguished by a spirit of restlessness and rashness of enterprise, and of daring and reckless innovation. And unless the story of its late trials and decline is presented to the public, and *especially* to its guardians, as a solemn and enduring warning of the evils to which it is exposed, there are, in my view, strong grounds for apprehension, that this Institution will again be the subject of vicissitudes, at no distant period, not less disastrous than those already experienced. But let those who shall be charged with its future destinies be faithful to their trust,—let them avail themselves, as they ought, of the knowledge of its past misfortunes, and of the causes of them, and there will be nothing to fear. Its course will be steadily onward, and the hopes of its warmest friends cannot fail to be fulfilled.

HENRY DAVIS.

Clinton, 18*th April*, 1833.

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INTRODUCTION.

CHARTERED seminaries of learning are the property of the public. They are founded and endowed by the authority of the state. The Trustees, who alone possess the right of supervision, and the direction and control of their concerns, are by the same authority invested with their powers; and it is the interest of the public to inquire, and they have a right to know, whether those powers are exercised in accordance with the purposes for which they were granted.

The Trustees are *primarily* and *chiefly* responsible; and every instance of failure is to be attributed *principally* to their want either of wisdom or fidelity. Do they urge as an excuse that they have been unfortunate in their instructers?—that their officers have been unfaithful or incompetent to their duties? But who elected them to their offices? To whose want of wisdom is this mistake to be charged? When found unfaithful, why were they not called to an account? When found incompetent, whose duty was it, by an honorable arrangement, to induce them to retire, and to call others to their places who *were* competent? But their treasury, perhaps, has been exhausted—their funds misapplied. Shall this fact be their apology? Who are the constituted guardians of the treasury? Whose is the duty to watch over their finances with the wakefulness of an Argus, and to take care that every cent be judiciously appropriated? Who alone are to be held accountable for the application of their funds? In case of failure, then, to attempt to shift the responsibility and blame from themselves to others, and to seek shelter from public reprehension under subterfuges like these, savours neither of honor nor of honesty. Especially is this the fact, when the Trustees themselves cannot but know that the failure is the necessary consequence, in no small degree, of their own neglect and mismanagement.

Hamilton College has, for some time past, been a subject of deep surprise and solicitude. Daily and hourly has the question been asked, *Why have the prospects of this seminary been so suddenly blighted?—What malignant agency has dried up this fountain which was sending far and wide its pleasant waters?* Situated in one of the most healthful, delightful and fertile parts of our country; surrounded by a numerous, increasing, virtuous and enterprising population; with an endowment of $106,000 from the state, and $50,000 from private munificence,—Hamilton College was destined soon to rank, it was confidently believed, among our most respectable and useful seminaries of learning.

This Institution has, for years, labored under *peculiar* embarrassments. Its prospects, it is well known, have been recently overcast with thick darkness; and the writer,—painful as the undertaking is,—believes it imperiously demanded of him, by his duty to the Institution and to the public, and by a regard to his own character and to that of his associates, to lay before the world plainly and faithfully the origin and nature of those embarrassments, and the causes of its recent depression.

To the tribunal of an enlightened and impartial community we appeal with entire confidence in their justice. Let them possess the facts, and *then* let them judge. By their verdict let us stand or fall.

It will, perhaps, be asked, Why has this appeal, if necessary, been *so long delayed?*—and since the Board of Trustees have lately assured the public, that they are resolved on sparing no reasonable exertions to resuscitate the College, and the public confidence seems, from the recent increase of its students, to be in a good degree restored, why is it *now* necessary? These questions, should they be asked, admit of a satisfactory answer.

1. The principal reason which induced me to retain my office, in spite of a determined and powerful opposition in the Board of Trustees, (a firm conviction, considering their discordant and conflicting views, that in case I left them the College would be *completely* prostrated by a struggle among themselves,) has also induced me not to appeal to the public at an earlier period.

It is evident, had an appeal been made previous to a change in the Board, that the prospects of the Institution,—without professors, without scholars, and with an exhausted treasury and a Corporation distracted in their feelings and counsels, whose claim on the good will and patronage of the community, in their *official* capacity, would have been essentially impaired by a full disclosure of the facts in the case,—must have been rendered *absolutely* desperate.

2. Whenever an Institution, founded for the benefit and at the expense of the community, fails of its object, the general good requires that the community should fully understand the causes of its failure. The high standing of its Trustees furnishes no plea for their indemnity. In all cases, the greater the confidence reposed, and the higher the trust abused, the louder the call for a full disclosure of the abuse of that trust. And justice *always* requires that those who are in fault,—not the innocent,—should be held responsible; and that they alone should bear the reproach of it.

3. Without a public statement of facts, the causes of the previous embarrassments of the College, and of its late unexampled declension, never can be thoroughly and correctly understood abroad: and it is a fact not to be doubted, as is evident from enquiries and suggestions daily made, that such have been the *representations* in its vicinity, and so industriously have they been made, that a majority of the inhabitants even in this county are still greatly deceived as to the causes, or are in much doubt and perplexity respecting them.

4. Notwithstanding the prospects of the Institution appear to be brightening, yet is it possible that it should rise to that high standing which, considering its local advantages, is naturally expected, unless the present Corporation, *as a body*, possess the strong and unwavering confidence of the public, to which, in the opinion of those who know them *well*, they are justly entitled? "The fall of your Institution," says the President of one of our first Colleges to me, "is one of the wonders of the age." And will the public repose *such* confidence in the present Board—will *they* be expected to succeed better than their predecessors, unless this *wonder* is explained?—unless it is clearly understood, that the Institution has been embarrassed, its prospects blighted, and the expectations of its friends disappointed by management and measures *so extraordinary* that there is no danger of their repetition?

5. If the President has been injured in his official character by the proceedings of the Board, it is essential to his standing and influence, as the head of

the College, (aside from all private considerations,) that the public should be made acquainted with the nature of those proceedings, and with the motives of them.

6. Certain members who were active in the measures (some one or more of them movers of the same,) which brought the College to the borders of desolation, still hold their seats in the Board. It is not to be expected, after what they have said and done, that they can be willing to see the Institution rise to its former standing under its present government. Some of them, it is *known*, are still throwing out their unfriendly insinuations, viz. *that the College cannot rise without a new President—that it is in vain to attempt to raise it*, &c. It seems morally certain,—judging from the present and the past,—that they will continue their efforts *secretly*, if not openly, to impede the exertions of the majority of the Board and the faculty.

The good of the Institution requires, that such exertions should be rendered powerless, that the public should be fully apprized of the former conduct of these gentlemen, in order correctly to estimate the motives of their *continued* opposition.

7. It is believed, that a full and public exposure of the causes of the embarrassments, and of the late rapid declension of Hamilton College, will prove a salutary warning to its future guardians; and that it *may* furnish a seasonable caution, in this age of innovation, to the guardians of other Colleges.

In the expose which I am about to make, it is with reluctance that I am obliged to speak with so much freedom not only of the measures of the Board of Trustees and of the faculty, but of the conduct of certain individuals of those bodies; and most deeply do I regret to be constrained to speak so often and so freely of myself. But ought motives of delicacy and personal considerations to restrain from the use of the only means which seem to be left of redeeming from a state bordering on desolation, and of saving from final ruin, an Institution which has justly inspired the well-wishers of the community with the most sanguine hopes, and which, without doubt, yet may be, under judicious auspices, an honor and a blessing to our country?

And when the reputation of a man who has spent thirty years as an instructer in public seminaries of learning, and passed through every grade of academic office, without his ability or his faithfulness, so far as he knows, ever having been called in question, is wantonly and unfeelingly assailed, (no matter from what motives or in what manner,)—when it is not merely insinuated, but openly and boldly asserted, *that he is not fit for his office, and never was fit for it*, shall he not speak of himself with freedom? Would silence, from motives of delicacy, become him in circumstances like these? Would it not prove him wanting in independence and in duty to himself? Shall he not parry the thrust by all lawful means, when he sees the dagger drawn to assassinate his reputation?

The writer urges no claims to infallibility for himself or his associates. In many things, no doubt, we have all come short of our duty. As to my own course of conduct, as the head of the Institution, it has been far from being free from imperfections and errors. But I see no cause, however, to accuse myself of remissness or want of fidelity, *generally*. I am not conscious that my labors have not been in proportion to my strength, nor equal to the labors usually performed by men in like stations. As to my associates, if I

may speak from long and diversified experience, they have not been less able nor devoted as instructers, than are the officers of other Colleges.

In such a narrative, it is difficult to enumerate, very specifically, the causes of evil to the Institution, or to arrange them under distinct and appropriate heads: they are to be learned incidentally and occasionally, from the general history. If I am not greatly mistaken in my own reasonings and conclusions, the following facts will be satisfactorily elicited: if so, there will remain no room for surprise that the College has not been more flourishing, nor that it has been recently brought to the verge of ruin, viz.

1. That certain leading men in the Board of Trustees have pertinaciously followed their own views, without proper regard to the experience and judgment or feelings of the faculty, and have been disposed to control the measures of the Board, and to hold the destinies of the Institution in their own hands.

2. That they have suffered themselves to be influenced by the prejudices of the scholars; have listened to their complaints against the faculty, or a portion of them—thus inviting the scholars to complain; and have countenanced and encouraged them in their disaffection and in conspiracy.

3. That they have made an improvident use of the funds of the Institution.

4. That they have been in the practice of speaking of the College, and especially of its faculty, in a manner tending seriously to its injury.

5. That they have endeavored to escape the odium of their own ill-advised measures by attempting to induce the faculty to resign, and thus tacitly to acknowledge to the public that *they* were the cause of the failure of the Institution.

6. That they have endeavored to model and organize the Institution anew, for the same purpose, and some of them from further motives of a more private and personal character.

7. That recently they and other members of the Board have been determined, provided their own measures should not prevail, that the College should be prostrated.

8. That their associates generally have yielded to *their* views and measures without opposition.

9. That certain members of the Board have been resolved on removing the President at all hazards.

I wish it to be understood, and remembered, that whatever may be my opinion of the official conduct of the Corporation, I have entertained great respect for them as men of general intelligence. I have often remarked that, in this respect, I have been acquainted with the Trustees of no College, who, in my judgment, were their superiors.*

It is not, perhaps, surprising, that those members of the Board who have arrogated the province of ruling, should feel and act as they are believed to have done. They were among the early settlers of the county; they were prominent in moulding and stamping its political character, and giving it influ-

* It is but justice to remark, in regard to those members of the Corporation, who have unwisely, as I conceive, controlled its measures, that the treatment which I have received from them, independent of our official relation, has been uniformly courteous and respectful.

ence in the councils of the state : and it is not strange, when it is recollected what human nature is, that they should continue to feel that all must yield to to *their* wishes and bidding.

But to these remarks there are honorable exceptions. Among those early connected with the institution, some there were—one of whom left us just at the commencement of our difficulties—who were above all private views and regards ; whose predominant object was the good of the College ; and whose salutary influence, when with us, was always felt. And there was another of this number, whose opinions were rarely opposed ; and whose presence at our deliberations might be regarded as a pledge that every thing which was done, would be well done. But the presence of these men, long since, ceased to influence our councils : and unfortunately for the Institution, such were their avocations, while members of the Corporation, that they rarely attended its meetings.

As circumstances were, since the removal of these gentlemen from us, the authors of the measures which so suddenly drôve from the institution its officers and scholars, expected, it is thought, but an unavailing opposition. A considerable portion of the members had recently been called to their seats. Most of them, as was no doubt anticipated, were brought implicitly under their guidance. But others, contrary to what was expected, and several who had been longer associated with them, have made strenuous opposition to measures, for the consequences of which they entertained the most fearful apprehensions.

In regard to those members who have been in the habit of silently acquiescing in the views of the master spirits of the Board, I presume not to say that they have not acted conscientiously. It has been repeatedly remarked, (in substance,) " we must be united in our proceedings ; we must let these men (i. e. the leaders) have their way ; their influence is such, it will not do to oppose them." It is always unpleasant to counteract those who have long been in the habit of ruling, and who are determined still to rule, and feel as if they had a right to do it.

A NARRATIVE, &c.

PREVIOUS to my acceptance of the Presidency of this College, [1] I had been encouraged, by the most unequivocal assurances from the then President of the Board, the Honorable M. S. Miller, and their committee, to expect the cordial co-operation, not of that body only, but of the friends of science and religion in this country generally.[2] How far the expectations which such encouragement from such men would naturally excite have been answered, facts must decide.

When I came to this College, it had been organized five years. Of the management of its concerns during that period I have little to say. I shall dwell chiefly on what I myself know, and in which I have been personally interested. At the commencement of my services here, my highly respected friend and predecessor had been "resting from his labors" about ten months. I found here three Professors, all in the vigor of manhood, who, in their respective departments, had probably no superiors in any College of our country.[3] But the discipline of a College so long left

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[1] I was elected President of Hamilton College 21st Jan. 1817, as successor of the Rev. Dr. Backus; and President of Yale College 11th of Feb. ensuing, as successor of the Rev. Dr. Dwight. Both of these offices, after mature deliberation, I conceived it my duty to decline, out of regard to the peculiar circumstances of Middlebury College, with which I was then connected. But in the course of the following spring and summer, believing it well-nigh certain, from the languishing and rapidly declining state of the University of Vermont, and from conversation had with some of its warmest and principal friends, that, provided the President of the University could be received at Middlebury, the two institutions might be united, I considered It my duty to proffer my services to the Corporation of Hamilton College. I was re-elected to the Presidency 21st July, and entered upon its duties the last of October, 1817. The Corporation of Middlebury College, however, were not disposed, in the issue, to follow my views upon the subject.

[2] The late Hon. Morris S. Miller remarks, in a letter dated Feb. 1817—"As to the Board of Trustees, I am persuaded you may rely on them for every possible exertion in favor of the Institution, and for the most undoubted good will towards yourself. We have no doubt but that our funds will, before long, be placed on a very respectable footing." In a communication from a committee of the Board, viz. Hon. M. S. Miller, Hon. Jonas Platt, and the Rev. Dr. Norton, dated July, 1817, the gentlemen say—"Permit us to assure you of the *earnest* and *unanimous* wish of the friends of religion and learning in this quarter, that you would come and help us." Judge Miller remarks, in an unofficial communication of a few days later date—"The vote," (alluding to the appointment,) "as well as the resolutions thereon were all unanimous, which has never before been the case with us on any similar occasion."

[3] Professors Noyes, Norton and Strong. Professor Norton was taken from us Dec. 1818. In the death of this indefatigable and excellent scholar, and devoted and zealous officer, the Institution experienced a loss which it has never since ceased to feel.

without a head, however able its Professors, would not be likely to be maintained as it ought.[4] From actual observation, I was soon convinced that the question was to be settled, *Whether our young gentlemen were to govern or be governed.* This conviction I expressed to my associates within a week after my arrival; and I remarked to them—"You must all stand at your posts: let us proceed kindly, deliberately, but firmly, and we shall soon restore order and harmony. Then we shall have good times, and not till then." No transgression of a specific and strongly marked character occurred till several weeks had elapsed.[5]

CONFESSION OF THE SOPHOMORE CLASS.

At the morning recitations on Christmas, the several classes were informed that the faculty had agreed that the usual exercises after 11 o'clock should be dispensed with till the evening exercises of the chapel. The Sophomore class immediately resolved, or came to an understanding among themselves, that they would not attend the recitation at 11 o'clock. This class was considered by the faculty the most correct class, as to their deportment, then in College; and embraced a much greater proportion of pious young men than any other. Their instructer, who soon became acquainted with the fact, remonstrated with one of the most respectable of the class against their purpose, and advised him to dissuade them from it. His reply was—"*I presume the class will not find it convenient to attend recitation.*" At the ringing of the bell, their instructer found the door of the recitation room locked against him. After breaking it open, it is believed that one or two of the young gentlemen made their appearance. The other classes attended their exercises as usual. On the evening of the

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[4] Judge Miller, in a letter dated 17th Feb. 1817, remarks—"We have been without a President since December, and of course subject to all the embarrassments incident to such a state of things. The faculty being deprived of their head are not so harmonious as could be wished; and the difficulty to be apprehended from this source may be in proportion to the time we must be compelled to be without a President." The College had *then* been deprived of its head about two months; and since it remained without one more than ten, it is rational to conclude that the difficulty alluded to was not diminished.

[5] At a meeting of the faculty on an evening or two before Christmas, I asked what relaxation from their studies had usually been granted to the scholars on that occasion, and whether there was an Episcopal church in the neighborhood which we could conveniently attend. And I remarked that, at Colleges in the vicinity of such a church, it was customary, so far as I was acquainted with their usages, to dispense with all the exercises after the morning recitations till evening prayers. Some of the faculty thought that the afternoon recitations had usually been omitted; others that the recitations at 11 o'clock also had sometimes, at least, been dispensed with; and I was informed that there was no Episcopal church nearer than Utica,—ten miles distant. The faculty finally agreed unanimously that the recitations of the afternoon be omitted; and that those young gentlemen belonging to Episcopal families, and others who might apply for permission to attend church in Utica, should be excused from the 11 o'clock recitation also. It was remarked, that it might be advisable to let them have likewise, for the purpose of recreation, one half of the approaching New-Year's day.

same or the following day, I sent for four or five who were among the oldest and most pious and respectable members of the class, as I supposed, and expressed to them my deep regret at the existence of such a spirit of insubordination in the Institution, and surprise and alarm on finding those professing themselves Christians the subjects of it. I remarked to them—"I trust you, young gentlemen, are praying with other Christians for the blessing of God upon the Institution; but so long as this spirit exists among us we have no reason to expect his blessing." After conversing with them for some time affectionately, but decidedly, they left me, with the view of consulting their companions, as I supposed, on the subject of a confession. At a late hour of the evening a confession from the class was brought me by one of the members, who remarked that the class were not willing, or could not be persuaded, to make it in public. But the faculty, considering the nature of the offence, and the state of the College, were agreed in the opinion that nothing could be accepted of them short of a public confession. It was then resolved unanimously that, provided they should refuse to make such a confession, it would be our duty to suspend them from the privileges of the Institution till they should be willing to make it. All the members of the class concerned in the transaction were severally called before us, and when informed of our decision, without making any objection, they subscribed a confession which was to be read before the scholars and faculty. Shortly after making their confession they all called on me, and wished to know whether they could have honorable dismissions from the College. My answer was—"As you have made ample reparation, young gentlemen, for your offence, I know nothing to the contrary, provided you obtain permission from your parents or guardians, and produce vouchers from the treasurer of the payment of your college dues." Forthwith they were active in their exertions for the attainment of their end; and we had for several days a scene of much confusion.—The inhabitants of the town, who must have well understood the circumstances of the case, and the previous condition of the College, approved universally and cordially, so far as we ever knew, of the measure of the faculty. About the fourth day subsequent to the confession one of the young gentlemen called on me and said—"I have come, sir, barely to say to you, that on a calm review of what has lately taken place, I do not see that the faculty could have done less. I am perfectly satisfied: I shall stay, and do all I can to induce my class-mates to stay. Had I only slept upon it, I never should have asked for a dismission. I hope you will forgive me for doing it." Several others called soon after, and expressed themselves in language of similar import. The scene was now changed; the College became tranquil; its government was established; and no class, I am confident, since my residence here, has ever left us with feelings of higher respect for their instructers, nor with stronger attachment to the Institution.

Experience proved clearly, so far as my knowledge extends, that a more salutary act of discipline was never exercised in any College. The faculty had no apprehension that any reasona-

ble person, acquainted with the circumstances, could complain of it; and were not a little surprised and alarmed on learning, a few days subsequent, that there was strong dissatisfaction in the Board; but it was never understood that any considerable portion of the members expressed their dissatisfaction openly, or that they were dissatisfied at all.[6] Within ten days after the event took place, one of the most influential members of the Corporation argued for some time, in the presence of the father of one of the young gentlemen concerned, to convince me that the measure was severe and improper. But the father himself expressed not the least dissatisfaction, after understanding the circumstances; and he left me, I was persuaded, without an unkind feeling towards the faculty, notwithstanding the arguments of the Honorable member.[7]

About two years subsequent to the above affair, a certain member remarked to me in the presence of the Board—"It is necessary that you treat your scholars in a manner kind and conciliatory. Had not some of the Trustees taken great pains to soothe the feelings of the young men themselves, and to satisfy their parents and other friends, that confession required of the Sophomore class, soon after you came here, would have proved a very serious evil to the College." My reply was—"I cordially assent, Mr. President, to the remark of the gentleman, as to the manner in which we should treat our scholars: it is the manner in which we always endeavor to treat them. Your faculty expect the support of the Corporation: we can do nothing without it. But I was not a little alarmed, Sir, on finding that, in relation to the difficulty alluded to, we had not the cordial support of all the members of this Board. When on a journey to the West, not long after it took place, a clergyman remarked to me—'A member of your Corporation was here recently: he gave me an account of your treatment of the Sophomore class. He talked much about it, and complained of the measure as severe. But,' said the clergyman, 'I could not see, from the gentleman's own statement, that you could have done less.'" The member remained silent: well might he be silent, for he himself was the man.[8]

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[6] Subsequently, I occasionally met many of the parents and other friends of the young gentlemen implicated in the matter; and, with the exception of the mother of one of the young men, not an individual among them all appeared inclined to censure the faculty in any degree.

[7] The following communication is from an unquestionable source.—The facts were first communicated to me in conversation about three weeks after the difficulty occurred in the College. The member of the Board alluded to, was one of the oldest and most respected of that body. "As near as I can state words, Mr. ——'s statement, made to me at ——, in Jan. 1818, was the following:—'The faculty have treated the Sophomore class with too much severity, and we (i. e. the Trustees) shall not allow it. They are in our hands; *and we will let Dr. Davis know that our young men are not to be governed like the students in the New-England Colleges.*'"

[8] By some, perhaps, this disposition of certain members of the Board to cavil and to find fault with the measures of the faculty, may be regarded of little consequence; and so minute a detail of circumstances, as entirely useless. But in the view of those who know much of human nature, and are at

DISMISSION OF A YOUNG GENTLEMAN ON PROBATION.

From the time of the aforesaid disturbance till the spring of 1819, the College was tranquil. At least, we had no serious troubles. The scholars were diligent in their studies, and punctual in their attendance on its exercises; and it seemed to be the prevailing opinion that the authority of its government was well established and its reputation increasing. At this period an event occurred which proved very unpleasant in its consequences. In the autumn of 1817, previous to my arrival here, a young gentleman, who had been in a distant College, was examined for admittance to our junior class. His examination was sustained; but as he had no certificate of his dismission from the College of which he had been a member, he was informed that he could be admitted to the exercises of the Institution, but not to actual membership, till such a certificate should be procured.—He encouraged the officers who examined him to believe that he would meet with no difficulty in procuring one.

Some months after this, a communication was received from his former President. He remarked that the young gentleman left them in such circumstances that no dismission could be granted him; but as it was understood his conduct since leaving them had encouraged hopes of his amendment, it would be no ground of complaint with them, but rather a matter of gratification, should we receive him into our College and make farther trial of him. According to a then existing by-law, no young man who had been publicly censured at another College, could be admitted into this, without the approbation of the prudential committee, of which the President of the College was a member. The communication was laid before the faculty and also before this committee; but as the young gentleman had already proved himself an unwholesome inmate, and had repeatedly received our private admonitory advice and counsel, it was thought advisable that he be kept some time longer on probation; and I was author-

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all conversant with the difficulties of College discipline, the subject will present a very different aspect. The Trustees are supposed to know the facts—to be competent judges. They profess and are believed to be friends of the College. When they complain, therefore, it is taken for granted that they do it not without cause. Let then a few individuals of such a body, or indeed only one or two of them whose opinions are respected, be in the habit of cavilling at the measures of the faculty, and who need be at a loss as to the influence on the College? For it is not to be doubted, that a few individuals who are disposed to find fault, will say more against a measure than ten times their number, who cordially approve of it, will say in its favor—as it is a known law of our fallen nature, that the man who has marked his victim will usually make ten times the effort for his destruction that his friend will make to save him from ruin. And an enemy under the garb of friendship will effect an hundred fold greater amount of injury by the same efforts than one who is in *name* as well as in *reality* an enemy. Not that I would insinuate that the cavils and complaints alluded to were originated by a spirit of hostility either to the College or its faculty. Far different is my opinion. A propensity to find fault is the constitutional infirmity of some men. Besides, to condemn measures in which they have had no agency, or about which they were not consulted, would seem to be regarded by them as a sure way of appearing wiser than others.

ized by the prudential committee, without further consulting them on the subject, to receive him into College as a member, or to suspend him finally from its privileges, whenever circumstances in my view should render either course proper. The young gentleman was informed of his situation, and he assured me that we should have no more reason to complain of him. But notwithstanding his assurance, he was, as was soon ascertained, still prone to mischief. His example was repeatedly spoken of by several of the faculty as injurious to his fellow-students. He was a youth of promise, as to talents, and we were very desirous to save him. But our counsels and warnings continuing to prove unavailing, I became convinced at last that we ought no longer to bear with him. I expressed my conviction to the faculty. Most of them agreed with me in opinion. But as some of them were apprehensive it might produce dissatisfaction should we then send him off, as we had proved against him no specific transgressions of an aggravated character, I thought it expedient to delay a little. About two weeks subsequently, the railing of the seats in the chapel was broken. Soon after it was repaired, a fresh attack was commenced upon it. The young gentlemen were then informed publicly, that in case the mischief was repeated and the authors of it detected, (as it was presumed they would be,) they must not expect to escape with impunity. Within a few days the railing was again broken, and badly broken. Of about twenty young gentlemen whom I interrogated privately, some said they knew not who did it: the greater part suspected it was done by a certain individual whom they all named; but two of them (and as respectable young men as there were in the College,) remarked that they had no doubts on the subject; that they saw a certain person do it with their own eyes. This was the same person who was suspected by others. I then informed the young gentleman that his probation was at an end, and that he could no longer remain with us. He declared himself innocent, and said the persons who had done the mischief would come forward and acknowledge it, rather than he should suffer for their act.—He remarked that he had influence in College, and could, were he disposed to do it, make the faculty much trouble. A young gentleman soon called on me and assured me positively that *he* did the mischief. He afterwards frankly acknowledged that he had asserted what he knew to be false; and that he had been induced to do it presuming he could bear the censure better than his friend.

This affair, trifling as it was in itself, produced great commotion in the College. Very unfortunately, one or two of the professors, in some way or other, received the impression that I was deceived as to the testimony.[9] A considerable part of the Se-

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[9] As to the names of the witnesses, I felt myself sacredly bound not to disclose them to any one. But I was at liberty to state that no two young gentlemen in the seminary were more respected; that they gave me positive assurance that they were eye-witnesses of the fact, and expressed deep solicitude for the individual concerned; and that one of them remarked—"I wish,

nior and Junior classes presented a petition to the President, praying that the sentence might be reversed. The subject necessarily came before the prudential committee. After a thorough investigation, all the circumstances of the case were submitted to the Board, and the conduct of the President of the College received their approbation. But before the Corporation had all left the ground, a member of the first respectability remarked to me—"Now the Board have sustained your authority plumply; and if you don't call back that young man, or place him in such a situation as will enable them to give him a degree, they will be dissatisfied with you."[10] From the standing of this gentleman, I had no reason to doubt that he expressed the views of the most influential men in the Board, and that he was requested by them to speak to me on the subject. A gentleman in a neighboring town informed me, about two weeks subsequent to the meeting, that one of the Trustees had remarked to him—"We sustained the President: we could not do less." 'But from his insinuations,' said the gentleman, 'I took it for granted they were not satisfied.'

From this period, my mind was filled with gloomy forebodings. I expressed, confidentially, strong apprehensions to some of my friends, that Hamilton College would never rise to that degree of usefulness and respectability which was naturally expected, unless under different auspices. I regret to say that these apprehensions have never been removed, but repeatedly deepened by the occurrence of succeeding events.

CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE PROFESSOR OF THE LATIN LANGUAGE.

Subsequent to the preceding affair, nothing occurred of a deeply alarming character till March, 1821. At this period, when the College, as the faculty believed, was in its usually tranquil state, I was not a little surprised at receiving information, late in the evening, that the Junior and Sophomore classes were secretly conspiring against the Latin professor, and that memorials, with the signatures of much the greater part of these classes, and ad-

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if it be possible, that he may be spared." Previous to this affair, there never was the least personal difficulty or misunderstanding between myself and any professor; nor has there been since, with the exception of an individual whose conduct will appear in the sequel. Nor has there been a want of harmony among us in our deliberations and results, saving what has been occasioned by the same individual. Nor, so far as I am able to recollect, has any one of us besides, excepting in a single instance, and that an unimportant one, ever appeared dissatisfied for a moment with a majority of his associates because he could not persuade them to adopt his views and measures.

[10] Logic, such as this, is totally beyond my comprehension, viz.—*You have done right; but if you don't retrace your steps, and undo what you have done, you will do wrong.*——For, unless I had done right, how, as honest men, could they sustain my authority?—and, unless I should do wrong, how could they be dissatisfied with me? But by what magic influence, by what supernatural agency of the Board, was the authority of the President to be sustained, provided he revoked his decision—called back the young man—and yielded to the feelings and prejudices of the scholars? Be it remembered that the young gentleman was not actually a member of College, and had been suffered to remain a long time only on probation.

dressed to each member of the Board, praying for the removal of this officer, were already in the post-office, or were to be sent there before the departure of the mail on the ensuing morning.—No time was to be lost: I sent immediately for four or five of the young gentlemen who, I was informed, had been chiefly concerned in the conspiracy. They frankly acknowledged the fact; and had been induced to the measure, they said, *solely from their conviction of the want of ability in the officer for his own department.* They all remarked,—one only excepted,—that, as a gentleman, and as a preacher, they highly respected him. But one young gentleman thought the professor had not used him well.[11] "Granting," said I, "your objection against your instructer well founded,—which, however, I am by no means prepared to grant,—his deficiency is an evil, and a serious evil: but the course you have taken is not the way to remedy it; and it is necessary that you stay your proceedings immediately." But the matter, as was to be expected, soon became public. Shortly after, about the third or fourth day, I believe, two of the members of the Board, from Utica, called on me, and remarked, that it was understood there was great disturbance in the College; that the Trustees in that village had been together, and it was thought advisable that a couple of them should come out and see whether the faculty need-

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[11] This gentleman was called to the office of tutor in the College, Nov. 1817, with reference to his officiating also as chaplain on the Sabbath. He arrived here a stranger to every one but myself. He soon became highly acceptable to the professors, and, for ought I knew, to the scholars also. Before he had been with us two months, each of the professors expressed to me an earnest desire that he might become a permanent member of the faculty. The expression of their desire was entirely gratuitous; and each one I presumed had formed his opinion for himself. At the semi-annual meeting of the Board in May, 1818, he was elected professor of the Latin language; but was to be considered as professor elect merely, and to officiate as tutor till the number of scholars in the Institution should increase to eighty. On this occasion I expressed my opinion of the qualifications of the candidate without reserve. I informed the Board that I knew him personally when an under-graduate; that he was considered by the faculty of the College at which he was educated as the best linguist in his class; that in consequence of the reputation which he had since sustained as an instructer, the professorship of languages in a southern university had been privately proffered him,—the appointment to which, however, he deemed it inexpedient to encourage, by reason of certain embarrassments of the institution. I likewise remarked, that at the time of his graduation, his President, from a conviction that his talents and manners were peculiarly adapted to academic life, advised him not to think of devoting his labors exclusively nor principally to the gospel ministry; and that on leaving the seminary at which he received his theological education, one of the professors, I had been informed, gave him the same advice. A letter received from Doctors Alexander and Miller, of Princeton, was read to the Board, in which they expressed a very favorable opinion of his qualifications for the office for which he was a candidate.* I further remarked, that while I thought him capable of filling ably and successfully the chair of an instructer, I believed him calculated to be peculiarly useful in a College, in consequence of his talent at government.

* I regret that this letter is not to be found.

ed help.[12] I replied—"The College was never more tranquil; and I am very sorry the Trustees in Utica should give themselves such unnecessary trouble." Immediately after, or within a few days, the professor wrote to the president of the Board, informing him that he should resign his office, or that it was his intention to resign it, at the ensuing meeting in May.[13] Unpleasant as this subject was, I felt no solicitude for the result. In my own view, the course of duty was so perfectly obvious, I could not apprehend the Board could mistake it. I took no pains to consult the members: with one of them, however, whom I incidentally met, I conversed with freedom, whose views, I had no doubt, accorded exactly with my own. "The young rogues," he remarked, "must not be countenanced in such

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[12] Is it not remarkable that the gentlemen in Utica, who so well understood the etiquette of business, did not perceive that in this measure they were assuming the original powers of the Board itself, which had been delegated to the faculty, and usurping the *appropriate* duty of the prudential committee? This committee was composed of five members, all of whom (one excepted,) lived within about a mile from the College: and one of their principal and specific duties is, as the terms import, to give counsel and advice to the faculty, when called on for that purpose, in cases of emergency.

[13] The professor, so far as I knew, had adopted the measure without consulting any one. After he had formed his purpose to resign, as it seemed, he called at my door with two letters in his hand, and remarked—"I have written two letters to the President of the Board: in one I inform him I shall resign my office (or it is my intention to resign it) in May; in the other, that I shall do it at commencement;—which of them had I better send?" "If you think it best," I replied, "to send either, (or if you have made up your mind that it is expedient to resign,) perhaps it would be as well to send the first." But the abstract question—Do you advise me to resign my office? was never put to me, nor a word uttered by me touching that subject. I make these remarks, because a principal member of the Board, as I have been assured by another member, has accused me of inconsistency, viz. in advising the professor to resign, and then opposing the acceptance of his resignation; and because another Trustee has remarked, in the presence of myself and several other gentlemen, that a member of the Board, of great influence, had complained of my *management* and *finesse* When asked what facts he instanced as the ground of his complaint, he replied that none were specified, excepting my conduct in the affair of professor ——, in advising him to send in his resignation, and afterwards opposing the acceptance of it before the Board.—How many other Trustees have made the same complaint against me I know not. The instances mentioned came to my knowlege in a manner purely incidental.*

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* The following is an extract from a communication received from the professor since the above was written:—"As to my resignation, I know that I neither consulted you nor any other man; but made up my mind to throw myself upon the honor of the Trustees. If they did the thing they ought, I knew the difficulty would soon be over. If they did not, I wished to have no more to do with them. I wrote two letters, and merely asked you which of the two I should send—as one contained a resignation at Commencement, the other at the end of the spring term." It is now known that it was extensively reported by some of the Trustees, that the professor acted in accordance with my advice, in sending in his resignation, notwithstanding my strenuous opposition to accepting it. Such are the means which some of the Trustees of Hamilton College have been in the habit of using to give reputation to its officers.

things." When the Board had met, and the resignation was presented, I asked the gentleman alluded to, to make a motion that the resignation be returned to the professor, with a request that he would re-consider his resolution. He replied—"I have got another member to make a motion;" but when the motion was made it was, to my utter surprise, *that the resignation be accepted.* The debate on the question was continued for some time, and with not a little interest. The advocates for accepting contended that, as the memorials had not come to the Board, and they were ignorant of their contents, they could have no influence on the question, and the Board had nothing to do but to accept the resignation: that, had the young men been permitted to send their memorials to the members, the case would have been materially different. It was remarked, that some of the scholars were threatening to leave the College, should the professor remain, and would no doubt do it. On the other hand, it was argued that, as to the effect on the Institution, and on the feelings and reputation of the officer, it could make no possible difference, provided the resignation was accepted, whether it was accepted with or without the memorials coming to the Board: that they would prove the cause of the removal of the professor, which was the only end wished to be effected by them: that this issue, whether with or without the presentment of the memorials, would have the same paralysing influence upon the government of the College: that, as to the scholars threatening to leave the Institution, such things were not to be regarded by the Board, if they intended to support their College, and render it an honor to themselves and a public benefit: that if their threat was to be regarded at all, it was to be viewed as a reason against accepting the resignation rather than in favor of it. In regard to the argument founded on their ignorance of the contents of the memorials, I informed the Board that I had that morning obtained them of the young gentlemen—that they were then in my possession, and ready to be presented to them, if they wished it: that the prayer of the young gentlemen for the removal of the professor rested solely on their opinion of his ability as an instructer. It was not contended, I remarked, that the gentleman had been free from errors in his instruction.—He had necessarily been much occupied in his preparations for the chapel; and had not always had the opportunity which was desirable in preparing for the exercises of his class. It was further remarked, that almost any one in such circumstances would be liable to mistakes: that any young man would suffer in comparison with professor Norton, who was an unusually correct and critical scholar in his department; and that our scholars since his death had seemed, by some means or other, to regard this gentleman as his successor. "But with respect to the ability of the professor," said I, "that is not the question to be now settled by you: it is a question of a very different nature: it is whether this Board or your scholars are the judges of the qualifications of your officers. By accepting this resignation, you will virtually say to the young men—*Any instructer shall be hereafter removed, who, you shall tell us, is not qualified for his office.* You will establish

a precedent which will put it within the power of your scholars to drive every instructer from the Seminary whose faithfulness shall become irksome to them. The gentleman who is the subject of the memorials has been the most vigilant and active in government of all your subordinate officers; and it is firmly believed both by your President and professors that, but for his vigilance and activity, the memorials would never have been thought of."[14] I added—"When I was on my way to your College, Mr. President, it was remarked to me by a gentleman well acquainted with its circumstances—'You are going to war.' And if I may be permitted to keep up the figure, I found soon after my arrival that we had a battle to fight. Your faculty, Sir, have fought the battle; and we thought we had won the victory. But, accept this resignation, and you throw us back four years. The battle is again to be fought; but whether we again win the victory is doubtful. Remember what I this day tell you: provided this resignation is accepted, you will rarely find a subordinate officer who will dare do his duty. As to my own duty, I shall endeavor to do it. If your College falls, I will be buried under its ruins." When the votes were taken on the question, it appeared that the resignation was accepted *unanimously*.[15]

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[14] A few days after the Junior class which were engaged in the conspiracy were graduated, I remarked to one of the members of it—"I never conversed with you, Sir, in relation to your treatment of the professor. Your associates in that affair, with whom I had conversation on the subject, all said to me, with the exception of one of them, that they had nothing against him excepting his want of ability as a teacher. Now tell me, like an honest man, how it was." The young gentleman replied—"Why, to tell the truth, if he had let us alone we should have let him alone." Another of them remarked to me, in allusion to it—"It was a wicked thing." I have heard many of the young gentlemen concerned speak of the matter; and almost if not quite all of them expressed themselves in terms of disapprobation and regret.

[15] In the debate on the question, most of the principal members took an active and decided part in favor of accepting the resignation; but not an individual, excepting the President of the College, came out in opposition to it. From the arguments of the supporters of the motion—from the equivocal and indecisive manner of a few others who spoke—and from the silence of the rest, I thought I saw no reason to hope that the sentiments of a single member coincided with my own. Indeed, I took it for granted, that all were opposed to me. In these circumstances I was embarrassed and perplexed beyond measure as to the course of duty. I was greatly disappointed and distressed at the manner in which the resignation was received and treated by the Board. I was grieved at the injustice and injury which would be done the professor by accepting it; and was alarmed for its consequences to the College. But my solitary vote could avail nothing. If I voted alone, I saw no good to be effected by it, but thought I saw much evil. I knew it would be industriously reported, that the President was on *one side* of the question, and the Corporation all on *the other*. And since the Board were taking part in opposition to the professor with a large proportion of the students, who were much excited on the subject, it was not to be questioned that my influence and usefulness, as the head of the College, would be seriously impaired by such a report. The result was wholly unlooked for by me. I had not time for reflection. But from the momentary view which I could take of the subject, it appeared that my duty to the Institution required that I should not give my vote alone on the question. But no sooner had we adjourned than it appeared that I had greatly misapprehended the views of some of the gen-

The aspect of this conspiracy against the professor, from its commencement, was peculiarly alarming. Their firmness of purpose, their coolness and deliberation, and their confidence in the success of their effort, evinced by the young men the moment the affair became public, (so different from what I had ever before witnessed, and in my view so perfectly mysterious, without the supposition of some extraneous agency,) and the visible gratification of certain members of the Board, as soon as it was rumored that the scholars had been conspiring for the removal of that gentleman, awakened in my breast painful suspicions that some of the Trustees themselves had so far forgotten their duty and their honor as to countenance if not actually to advise them in the measure.[16] Circumstances were developed in the course of the two next succeeding years, by which these suspicions were deep-

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tlemen. A certain member says to me, "This is a most extraordinary proceeding. We have passed a resolution with perfect unanimity, as it seemed, when a great proportion (or a majority) of the Board are opposed to it."—"Is that possible!" I replied. "Why then did not some of you rise and support me? Why did you leave me to stand alone on the floor?" He answered—"We were only waiting for you to vote: then we should have followed you." Another gentleman, who on that day had for the first time taken his seat in the Board, remarked, in my presence, to the president of the Board, before we had left the room—"You [i. e. the Corporation,] have ruined your College, Sir: neither you nor I have a friend in New-York who would send a son here, if he knew what we have been doing this day." It was soon evident from observation that the apprehensions expressed before the Board were likely to be fully realized. There was something in the appearance of the young men not to be misunderstood. It was evident they considered themselves as having achieved a complete triumph. But a few weeks subsequent to the occurrence, I was informed by a gentleman living in the vicinity of the College, that some of the friends of order in the Institution had remarked to him, *that the faculty, it was very obvious, dare not do their duty; that they were afraid to put the laws in execution.* As to those officers who still *were not afraid*, it was evidently the settled determination of many strenuously to resist their efforts. One of the professors, in visiting the rooms of the young gentlemen, was repeatedly treated with manifest disrespect, and in several instances to his face. He was told that *it was none of his business to visit their rooms: it was the President's duty.* More than once were some of the faculty actually stoned, in the evening, on the College premises, while engaged in the performance of their official duty. The effects on the Institution of accepting the resignation of the professor, as would easily be foreseen by any man experienced in College discipline, or who had been a careful observer of the natural ardor and buoyancy of youth, and their love of exemption from restraint, were deep and lasting. Our young men have ever since felt that *it has been in their power,*—to use their own language,—*to get rid of an unpopular officer whenever they pleased.* It was stated by a member, in the presence of the Board, soon after the work of reform had commenced in 1827, that some of our most correct and meritorious scholars, who were graduated several years after the resignation of the professor, and were not here at the time, had assured him that such were the feeling and conviction in College while they were members of it.

[16] By some of the Trustees it was actually regarded, as I thought, a matter of congratulation. Before the professor had intimated to any one his intention of resigning, one of them, in reference to the vacancy which he seemed to take for granted we should soon have to fill, remarked to me—"In future I will judge for myself. I will vote for none but men of talents." I replied—"It is indispensable, Sir, that your officers be men of talents; but

ened to a degree which amounted well-nigh to a conviction that such was the fact. But at last this *mystery of iniquity* was revealed as in broad daylight; and room was no longer left for doubt that my apprehensions had been well founded.[17]

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other qualifieations are also neeessary. Their usefulness depends much upon their moral eharaeters, their habits and principles, their manners and dispositions. It is important that they be men of harmonious views and feelings, who can eordially eo-operate in their labors." The gentleman answered me, as I perfectly reeolleet, in the following words, but with an air of authority and self-confidenee which would baffle deseription: "*I will have none but men of talents in the faculty; and if they can't agree, we* (i. e. the Corporation,) *will make them agree.*"*

* Herein is a grand secret as to the diffieulties of Hamilton College. This propensity of the Board has been a prolifie source of those evils which have chiefly embarrassed and eramped the Institution from its beginning, and retarded its progress and usefulness. The Trustees have regarded it much in the same light as a banking or manufaeturing company regard their establishment; I mean that their faculty, considered merely *as a faculty*, have been viewed by them little better than dependants, who were to submit implieitly to their will and dictation. I say not this of the Trustees *generally*.—The views of the major part of them, I fully believe, have been widely different. I speak of the master minds of the Board, who have felt as if all power was theirs, and whose influenee has been sueh that their assoeiates in offiee did not think it expedient to oppose them. It was onee remarked to me by one of this class, that *three members of the Board*, whom he named, *could carry any measure which they pleased* This class of members have seemed to be confident that their wisdom alone was eompetent to devise all proper measures, and their own power to accomplish them. Hence little regard has been paid to the experienee and judgment of their faculty in many of their most important proeeedings, or even to their character or feelings. My venerated predecessor was spared long enough to witness and to feel this propensity of the Board. During his last two years, he often expressed, as one of his professors has informed me, great anxiety for the College, on aeeount of the *strange* proceedings of the Trustees, as he considered them. He remarked to the professor a little previous to his death, that he believed God would soon remove him, and he hoped to a better world; *but he trembled for the College*. Immediately subsequent to the last meeting of the Board which he ever attended, (Sept. 10th, 1816) he remarked to the same gentleman, with indieations of deep emotion, "that the eorporation had taken out of his hands some of his appropriate duties." "They virtually told me," said he, "by their aets, that I am not fit for my plaee." He alluded more particularly to a resolution which they had just passed, (which appears in their minutes,) making it the duty of one of the professors to review and correet the eompositions of the Senior elass, whieh had ever been considered one of his own *proper* duties, and whieh, prior to this period, he had performed. This resolution, it would seem, the Trustees must have passed, without even having eonsulted their President, at any rate without his approbation.

No matter who the Corporation of a College may be, or who are their faculty:—only let the Corporation feel and aet in this manner, and no one needs the gift of propheey to divine the eonsequenees.

[17] In the following communieations, A., B., C., D., E., are substituted for names of young gentlemen eoneerned in the eonspiraey, all highly respeetable scholars, one of whom is now a elergyman of honorable standing in the ehureh, and the others of the same standing in *civil* society. M., N., O., P., for names of other members of the College, who had interviews with certain Trustees, and brought baek *their* opinion and advice to their associates in the enterprize. X., Y., Z., R., V., for names of members of the Corporation.

A. states as follows; viz. "I recolleet it was told among the students, that

In November, 1823, an occurrence took place without a parallel, it is believed, in the history of our American Colleges, as to

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some one of the Trustees, in conversation with one of the students, (perhaps Mr. ——, I don't precisely recollect,) told him that the proper method to be taken to remove Mr. ——, (the professor,) or have him removed, would be to present a complaint to the Trustees. It was the belief, I venture to say, of all the members of both the two classes, that the Trustees generally in Utica and Whitesboro', and some elsewhere, would not be displeased, if they should present them with the memorials they did, (rather designed to present,) and were probably encouraged to do so, by some observations made to them respecting Mr. ——, the professor, by different individuals of the Board. I have since that time heard the matter adopted and carried into effect by the students, approved of by two different members of the Board."* B. informs me, "When the matter was under discussion, and it was boldly proposed to effect the separation of Mr. ——, from the institution, certain individuals in the —— class, and in my own, evinced an ardour of zeal, and firmness of resolution, and above all, an indifference as to consequences, which could not well be accounted for. Even now, as well as then, I should be at a loss to account for the conduct of those individuals, in accomplishing such an object by such means, (their peculiar situation considered,) without supposing them to have acted under assurances of entire indemnity from some of the Board, and to have been urged to the prosecution of the purpose by being advised that their proceedings should be sanctioned by the Corporation. There were some, however, who questioned the propriety of the course which was pursued. It became necessary to inspire confidence, to confirm the wavering, and if possible, to place all engaged in the transaction out of the reach of all fear, as to the ultimate effect upon ourselves, as members of the institution. At this stage of the procedure, the rumor *first* reached my ears that we should be sustained by the Board. I cannot say where the report originated. I cannot designate the individual or individuals who made use of it to urge on the business. But that many, if not all of us acted under a full persuasion, that some members of the Corporation were conniving at the proceeding, and would see us safely through, I have no doubt. I entirely concur with ——, in the belief that we had the countenance and support of the Board. At the time, I scarcely knew one—and was on terms of intimacy with none of the Corporation." In allusion to this matter, the writer adds, although not professedly a pious man, "It is not so very lately that I have been made to feel the bitterness of regret---I might say, the stings of remorse. Years did not elapse, before I became sensible of the odious share I bore in that transaction. If none of those engaged in it acted with a purer motive and with more honest views than I can claim---then have they with me much to repent of."

C. remarks in reference to the effort to remove the professor, "The recollection of many circumstances connected with the event, has entirely passed from me. I may state, however, that during the excitement which preceded and attended the dismission of Mr. ——, I often heard that some member, or members, of the Board, residing either at Utica or in the vicinity, were disposed to lend a *favorable ear* to the complaints of the students. I remember to have heard my classmate M. often say of some one, (of X. if I am not very much mistaken) that when the views of the students respecting professor —— were given him, he would reply that "something must be done; the case must be investigated, &c. &c." I cannot, however, positively say that it was X. who made these replies. That this, however, was the *substance* of them, and that they were given by some very *influential* individual residing at or near Utica, and that M. reported them, is pefectly in my recollection. Farther than this, I cannot be positive."

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* Those individuals are designated; viz. R. and V.

its character; and by reason of the measures adopted by the Board in relation to it, not less extraordinary as to its effects.—

D., in allusion to the same affair, says, "I do know something of the origin of the transaction, and can freely and without hesitation say, that we did receive encouragement, and what we considered assurances of support, from certain members of the Board. I do not believe that the subject would ever have been presented to the Corporation, or even that the petitions would have been signed, had not such encouragement been given. I distinctly recollect that we considered Z.* and Y., and I believe X., as pledged to shield us from all harm. I cannot speak with as much confidence about X., as about Z. and Y. The report of their opinions was brought out from Utica by N. and O., who were then members of the College. X.'s views on the subject were reported, if I am not greatly mistaken, by M. We received no written pledges, and the expressions which were used, I cannot now recollect. I know that the impression was strong on my mind, and I believe the same is true of the others engaged in the affair, that the course we pursued was approved of by the gentlemen mentioned above, and that they would go all lengths in carrying into execution what we had undertaken. Ever since I have reflected calmly and deliberately on the subject, I have condemned the course we pursued—but at the same time, I have considered certain members of the Board as much more to blame than we were: and this opinion I have repeatedly expressed."

B., C., and D., subsequent to the preceding separate communications, furnished me with the following joint communication. "We have just concluded a conference in reference to the subjects; (i. e. the conspiracy against the professor, and the agency of the Trustees in that matter.) The following facts we are able to state *definitely* and *positively*, in addition to those which we have already communicated; namely:—1. That P. went to Utica during the excitement which preceded the dismission of Mr. ——, and on his return reported in the hearing of us severally, that Z. had expressed to him his approbation of our enterprise. 2. That P., who had previously to this, been diffident and timid, became now an active and decided friend of our measures. 3. That we ourselves and our coadjutors generally, felt that a new impulse had been imparted by this information to our courage, resolutions and hopes. These things have, in the course of our conversation, been brought distinctly to our recollection.

E. advises me, in relation to the efforts of his class, (not the class of which B., C., and D. were members,) to remove the professor—"The first serious charge which came to my knowledge, was his apparent desire to exercise more authority and power than we deemed in him vested. But this allegation not being sufficiently prominent to warrant any active proceedings on the part of the students, we were not long in discovering other and more serious grounds of complaint. Each day, during the recitation of Latin or Greek, a number of us were in the practice of writing down the errors of his syntax, prosody and translations. But previous to proceeding to active measures for his removal, we conceived it advisable to secure assistance, and that too, from a source that might be relied upon. For this purpose, a delegation was appointed to wait upon some of the Curators (Trustees) in whom we could safely trust. This was done both before and after the petition was drawn up and signed by the class, and the desired assistance promised. A communication was made to the class by other of its members, that we might rely with confidence upon the assistance of a portion of the Board of Trustees, whose influence was considered equal to the accomplishment of our purposes. The professor was most egregiously injured; the charges alleged against him were trivial, compared with the magnitude and extent of suffering and loss to him. He was a gentleman, a good scholar, and a useful officer."

The following is an extract of a communication from a gentleman of respect-

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* Z. is the gentleman who remarked to me, "I will have none but men of talents in the faculty, and if they can't agree, we (i. e. the Corporation) will make them agree." See note 16.

A cannon, heavily loaded and plugged, was fired and burst, at 2 o'clock in the morning, on the fourth floor of one of our dormitories. It was placed in the hall, by the side of a room occupied by a tutor, who, at the time, was asleep in an adjoining bedroom. It was never supposed by any one, that those concerned in the act had any design on the *life* of that officer. But a moment's reflection must have convinced them that in doing what they were contemplating, his life would be put in great jeopardy. His preservation was regarded by all acquainted with the circumstances as little less than miraculous. Had the cannon varied in position but a few feet only in a certain direction, his destruction would have been inevitable. His coat, which was hanging on his chair,

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able standing, who is not an alumnus of the College. "X. has interfered with the students of Hamilton College, in relation to the government, particularly in the case of ——, (the professor,) and has confessed it to ——. He told —— 'that he had sent for some of them and conversed with them,' &c. What he said, I know not; but from the fact that he acknowledged it to be an *interference*, as I understood, conclude that it was something to the purpose."

S. E.

Now compare the preceding statements with the following resolution, standing on the minutes of the Board, and which it *seemed* at the time, was passed unanimously; viz.—"Resolved, That the resignation of Mr. professor —— be accepted—at the same time the Trustees of Hamilton College cannot *forbear* to express their sentiments of Mr —— as a gentleman of *high literary attainments*, and of unblemished reputation, and the Trustees *deeply regret* the occasion of his separation from the Institution,—and that the Secretary furnish Mr. —— with a copy of this resolution."

Here I beg the liberty of putting a few interrogatories. 1. How is the conduct of the gentlemen Trustees, implicated in the foregoing statements, to be reconciled with the sentiments expressed of the professor in their resolution? While they could not *forbear* to express their sentiments of him as a gentleman of *high literary attainments*, and of *unblemished reputation*, how could they countenance and abet the scholars in their efforts to remove him from his office, solely, as the scholars declared in their memorial, because *they* believed he was wanting in qualifications for his office? How, as men of honor and of truth, could they say they deeply regretted the occasion of his separation from the College, after they, themselves, had been concerned in *creating* that occasion? 2. If those gentlemen really believed, after all, the professor did not possess the necessary qualifications for his office, and that his removal was desirable, (which it seems they could not have believed, if honest in their resolution,) was there no way of effecting it more manly and upright? more generous, humane, and just, as it respected the feelings, reputation, and future usefelness of the professor! 3. Can it be the duty of the Trustees of a College, in any circumstances, to encourage and make use of their scholars in a dark and covert manner, as instruments in effecting the removal of an officer? 4. Is such a procedure kind, or wise, as it respects the young gentlemen themselves? 5. Have not parents just reason to complain, when those under whose auspices they have placed their sons, with implicit confidence, and for the best of purposes, condescend to become themselves the means, by their advice and example, of training them to the base and corrupting work of intrigue and management? 6. How can the government of any College be supported as it ought to be, while some of its Corporation—and its principal members too—are encouraging the complaints and prejudices of the scholars, and secretly countenancing and supporting them in conspiracy against their officers? Such means *some* of the Board of Trustees of Hamilton College, those honored guardians of the interests of science and morality, have deigned to make use of for their advancement.

at the foot of his bed, was so rent in pieces as to be useless. The side of his chamber adjoining the hall was entirely carried away, and the door found standing erect against the opposite wall. Many of the doors in the same section of the building were burst open, and some torn from their hinges. In several windows scarce a pane of glass was remaining; and even the sashes in some instances were wholly burst away. The fragments of the cannon were thrown in every direction—some through the roof, and some through every obstacle quite into the cellar.[18] A transaction liable in its consequences to so tragical an issue, could not but produce deep sensations. Such was the tone of feeling on the subject, as soon as the facts were understood, that a lawyer of great respectability in a neighboring town declared that College punishments were inadequate to the offence; and a gentleman in Utica, and of honorable standing at the bar, remarked that he would give fifty dollars to carry on a prosecution rather than that the offenders should escape with impunity. The young gentlemen were greatly alarmed at the effects of their rashness; and instead of stepping forward and frankly acknowledging they had no anticipations of the consequences, and magnanimously palliating the offence by expressing their regret for their temerity, they at once resolved to endeavor to avoid detection by every means in their power. After a patient and scrutinizing investigation for several days, the faculty had obtained satisfactory evidence of the guilt of two of the offenders only, and those, it was believed, not the principals. Apprehending, from reports, that the transgressors had rendered themselves liable to a criminal prosecution, about fifty members of the College bound themselves, by a written covenant, not to take the oath if called before a court of justice. With the transgression, as it respected the laws and interests of the civil community, the faculty of the College had *officially* no concern. Convinced, however, granting such a prosecution proper, that it ought not to be undertaken by any gentlemen in the vicinity of the College, we thought it desirable to learn more correctly, the views of some of our principal citizens abroad. I had an interview with three or four gentlemen in Utica, all of them of the first standing, and connected with the College. I related to them the circumstances; I expressed no opinion on the subject, further than to say, that provided a prosecution should be deemed expedient, it was clear, in my view, that the gentlemen in Clinton should have no part in it.[19] After some conversa-

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[18] In addressing the scholars on the subject, a short time subsequent, the chairman of the committee of the Board remarked to them, that the same act, could it be so often repeated, would probably prove fatal to some of them nineteen times out of twenty.

[19] In regard to the prosecution, I had fearful doubts of the expediency of the measure. Some of the gentlemen in Clinton were talking of undertaking it. Whether the interests of civil society required it rather than the young men should escape with *entire* impunity, as had become evident that they otherwise in all probability would, there were those more competent to judge than myself; and I thought it my duty in a case like this, to acquiesce silently in their judgment.

tion on the subject, the gentlemen remarked, at least one of them, we will advise with some other gentlemen, and then acquaint you of our opinion. A few days subsequently, one of the gentlemen informed me that the Trustees in Utica, thought it expedient to have an informal meeting of the Board in that village, without delay. This meeting was not called in accordance with the provisions of the charter. It was not considered, therefore, as a *constitutional* meeting, and the gentlemen viewed themselves as acting not in their official capacity as trustees of the College, but merely as members of civil society. Indeed, the charter, in no circumstances, invests the Board with powers of civil or criminal jurisdiction.

The meeting was well attended. There were present, I believe, seventeen members. A correct detail of the circumstances of the case was given, and the nature and particulars of the evidence against A. and B., whom the faculty had detected. I expressed no opinion as to the course which was proper to be adopted. I remarked to the Board—as I have ever since had perfect recollection, "I think the case, gentlemen, can rarely exist, in which it is proper to appeal to the courts of law in support of College discipline: but whether the case now before you is such an outrage against the peace and order of society as to render a measure of this kind wise, rather than that the perpetrators should escape conviction and punishment, you, gentlemen, are the judges, not I." And I added, "It is a question which lies without the province of my experience." After much discussion, it was agreed *unanimously*, (at least no one spoke or voted against it,) to commence a criminal prosecution; and three of the members were appointed a committee for the purpose. It was afterwards suggested that it would be expedient for the committee *first* to visit the College, as it was probable that, on an investigation, the facts might be disclosed. A member of high distinction as a lawyer, remarked, "When the young men see the committee on the ground, and that such a body of men as this Board have taken up the thing in earnest, they will be induced to come forward and deliver themselves up." To this suggestion I remarked to the Chair, "Had the gentleman been acquainted with the views and dispositions of scholars so long as I have, no such expectation would be entertained by him. And rely upon it, not a single fact will be brought to light by your investigations." But the suggestion prevailed. The committee were finally instructed to repair to the College, and to institute an inquiry; and to adopt any other measures which might by them be deemed proper. They soon entered upon the labors assigned them. The faculty, at the request of the committee, took seats with them. The young gentlemen were studiously and uniformly treated by the committee, with great courtesy and respect.

But after a diligent examination of two half days and an evening, not the least light was thrown on the subject.[20] The scholars

[20] After nearly thirty years *personal* experience in the government and discipline of five Colleges, this measure was entirely new to me. Motives of

then were all called into the chapel, and addressed by the chairman of the committe with great ability and firmness, but with

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delicacy alone prevented me, when it was proposed before the Board, from an open and decided resistance to it. I then viewed it, as I ever since have, as a direct and dangerous encroachment upon the appropriate and exclusive province of the faculty ; and as tending, in no small degree, to impair their authority and influence with their pupils. It was too apparent from the appearance of the young gentlemen before the committee, not to be perceived that they had a similar view of it. For there was something in their every look, and word, and gesture, which insinuated beyond the power of misapprehension—*You are off your ground ; this is the business of the faculty, not yours.* Never, in any case, have I known the faculty of a College treated with such marked disrespect by scholars, as were the committee on this occasion. Some of the officers, if not all, spoke of it among themselves as a matter of surprise, that gentlemen of their standing should be treated, by our young men, with such a palpable want of deference. It was remarked by one of the committee, soon after the commencement of their investigation, "I am astonished at this insolence ; this spirit must be broken down." And it was subsequently remarked by them, "We must go through with this thing, or the College is ruined."

Several of the young gentlemen, since they were graduated, have mentioned to me, as a palliation of their conduct, that the general feeling and sentiment among them was, that the Corporation were meddling with that, with which, *properly*, they had no *immediate* concern : And they have also remarked, that the proceeding tended much, in the estimation of the thinking part of the students, to weaken and degrade the government of the faculty. Neither the Corporation, nor their committee, it is presumed, intended any such thing. But how could the effect be otherwise ? That such must be the necessary and inevitable tendency of such a measure cannot, it appears to me, but be perfectly obvious to every man of only common knowledge of human nature, who will for a moment consider the subject. For let the Trustees of a College only suggest to the scholars (I care not in what way) that the officers, in the opinion of the Board, are not able to govern them ; that the aid of the Board is deemed necessary in enforcing those regulations, and in securing the performance of those duties which are prescribed in the by-laws for the faculty, and although their influence and authority—provided they are discreet men—may not be at an end, yet they are directly and essentially impaired. The father of a family may, with equal wisdom, call in his neighbors, or the civil magistrate to his aid, in the government of his children. Let this be done, and what becomes of the cordial respect and obedience which are naturally due to every parent ? What becomes of his authority ?

All the powers expressly granted by the charter, or which are embraced in it by implication, as essential to the ends of the Institution, belong *originally* to the Corporation ; and to them alone. Some of these powers they have no right to delegate to any man, or set of men, viz : the power of organizing the Institution, of appointing the Instructers, of assigning them their respective departments and duties, of calling them to account if unfaithful, and of removing them if incompetent ; the power of controling and protecting its financial interests, and of making appropriations ; of conferring academical honors, and other powers that might be named. But as to the *powers* which the Board, in their *by-laws*, have expressly delegated to the faculty, in accordance with their Charter, and which the framers of it intended should be delegated to them, viz : the power of the instruction and of the immediate inspection and government of the students ; the power of investigating all transgressions of the rules and regulations of the Institution, and of enforcing the laws and inflicting the penalties prescribed : Powers and rights like these, once delegated, belong to the faculty, and to the faculty exclusively. The Board of Trustees say *implicitly*, if not *expressly*, to the officers of their College, when they put their by-laws into their hands, These are your Chart ; these your Directory, and the rights and duties here specified and enumerated, are immediately and exclusively yours. This done, and the Trustees have no authority to interfere,

equal affection and mildness. He closed his address in the following words, viz.—"Unless the facts, gentlemen, shall be disclosed, previous to Wednesday next, a criminal prosecution will then be commenced." It was now about 1 o'clock on Friday. After the usual exercises at 11 o'clock on the ensuing day, I addressed the senior class on the subject, and as kindly and affectionately as in my power. Among other things, I remarked to them, "they could not but be persuaded that the committee would persevere, and that detection was inevitable. I advised them as their own friend and as their parents' friend—provided any of them were guilty—that they voluntarily come forward and own the fact. And granting they were all innocent, that they recommend that those who *were* guilty, do it. Not long subsequent to the close of the recitation, three of them called on me, as a committee, I supposed, and wished to know "whether, provided the persons engaged in firing and bursting the cannon would come forward themselves and acknowledge the fact, the prosecution would be abandoned, and they punished only as the laws of the College prescribed." I replied, that the prosecution, in that event, would undoubtedly be abandoned. It was evident from the language of their chairman, that the committee wish no more, and I presume the Corporation wish no more. My answer did not satisfy them. "Can you assure us, Sir, (said they,) there would be no prosecution?" That, young gentlemen, I answered, I am not able to do. I have not power to pledge the committee—I have not power to pledge the corporation—I have not power to pledge the community. Any member of society has a right to complain to the proper authority, and to commence prosecution; and I am unable to prevent it. But if the young gentlemen concerned will take the course suggested, I will pledge myself, as a member of the Board, should any persons be still disposed to prosecute, to do all I can to prevent it; and I presume there would be no prosecution.[21]

On the following evening, more than twenty of the scholars fled from the college. Their parents or guardians were immediately apprized of the fact, and the circumstances which led to it.

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and they cannot interfere *directly* in the exercise of those rights and in the performance of those duties, without putting in jeopardy the vital wellbeing, if not the existence of the College. It could scarcely be less absurd, or less ruinous to the state, were the Legislative to interfere with the *appropriate* rights and duties of the Judicial, or of the Executive department. But let this be done, and without opposition, and where are our peace and tranquility? where our liberties and lives? Præ magnis illustrentur parva.

[21] It was soon stated and believed, that many of the young gentlemen reported thro' the country, wherever they went, that a committee of the scholars had waited on the President and informed him that, on condition the prosecution should be stayed, the persons concerned stood ready to give themselves up, and to submit to such penalties as the laws of the Institution required; but that the President promptly and unfeelingly rejected the proposition, and declared that nothing would answer short of prosecution and punishment by civil authority. They further reported, as it was understood, that the chairman of the committee of the Board had addressed the scholars in a violent and angry manner, and threatened them not with prosecution only, but with imprisonment.

By the flight of the young men, the purpose of the committee was defeated. The members of the Board in Utica, *then* immediately inserted in the papers a call for a meeting of the Corporation at the College, as soon as practicable by the charter, viz.—in three weeks from the date.

In less than a week many of the young gentlemen, as we had no doubt would be the case, were sent back by their parents.[22] In the view of the faculty, the path of duty was now clearly marked out to us. Had the matter been under our control, we should barely have said to them, as they returned, that we had no terms to state on which any of them could be restored to the privileges of the College, till the facts were disclosed,—and until that was done, they must all retire from the College premises, and were at liberty to go where they pleased. But the subject was not under our control. I called on some of the committee, and made known to them the opinion of the faculty. But the measure proposed by us was not deemed advisable. It was thought best by them, that the young men be admitted to the exercises of the College, as usual, till the meeting of the Board. I was now alarmed, and expressed to the treasurer of the College, my firm conviction that the Institution would be left by the Corporation in a worse state than that in which they found it. His reply was, "You may rely upon it, that committee will not flinch—they will go through with it." I answered him, "You may rely upon it, Sir, they *will* flinch—and remember what I say."

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD, Dec. 22, 1823.

When the Board assembled agreeably to the call, the young gentlemen who had fled had all returned, with the exception of two or three. The committee appointed at the informal meeting at Utica, made a report of their proceedings, which, it *seems* from their minutes, were "unanimously approved as *judicious*, *mild*, and *proper* in *all* respects." It was then resolved, that three other gentlemen be added to the committee, for the purpose of further investigation, and that they report the result to the board.[23]

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[22] I shall ever remember with peculiar feelings and sentiments of respect the magnanimous and public spirited conduct of the fathers of *most* of these young men, in circumstances so trying and painful to parental fortitude and affection. As soon as they were acquainted with the facts they ordered their sons to return. One gentleman remarks, "I send back my son to you with full confidence that justice will be done him. I am afraid he is guilty; but I see no other path of duty for me." Others expressed themselves in a similar manner. Should this narrative ever meet the eye of those few parents who adopted a widely different course, I cannot but believe they will be led to doubt whether the President was so greatly wanting in paternal feeling and tenderness in this matter, as they once suspected.

[23] It will appear somewhat remarkable, I presume, to those conversant with the administration of Colleges, that the President was not put upon this committee, nor even *consulted* by them during their deliberations—since he, undoubtedly, possessed the most accurate knowledge of the circumstances, and was most deeply interested—and since he is held by the Board in so high a degree responsible for the success of their measures, and the prosperity of the College.

But no further investigation was made by the committee; not a scholar nor any other individual was called before them. After some time spent on the subject, their report was, that, as to the two young gentlemen whom the faculty had detected as having participated in the outrage, A. should be expelled, and B. make a public confession; and that C. also should make a public confession for his contumacious deportment while under examination before the committee. As to those who had covenanted not to take the oath before the civil magistrate, the committee made no report. When they were asked, what was to be required of those concerned in the combination? the chairman replied, that *the committee wished the President's opinion on the subject.* I remarked, there was a great difference as to the character of the young men engaged in that transaction; that in regard to many of them, it was the first transgression, it was believed, with which they had ever been chargeable; and as we could not well make a discrimination, I should be satisfied with their subscribing a confession in the presence of the faculty,—that nothing less would, in my opinion be consistent with the interests of the College. Mild as this measure was, it was strenuously opposed. A member of the committee, and I believe one or two other members of the Board, expressed *fearful* apprehensions that *the young gentlemen would think it severe.* But after considerable debate the measure was adopted. The Board adjourned about sunset; and within twenty minutes after, when the scholars came out of the dining hall, from supper, there was a great rush, and shouting—*huzza! huzza! huzza! we are all saved but A.!* (i. e. the young gentleman to be expelled.) It is a fact, as has ever been believed, that before the Trustees had left the building in which they held their sitting, one or more of that honorable body had an interview with some of the young men, and informed them of all that was done. [24] During the whole session, not a word was uttered, to my knowledge, respecting the prosecution threatened by the committee. No reason was given by them, or even alluded to before the Board, for abandoning it. I had now *no doubt* that the committee, and probably other members of the Board, had become alarmed at their own measures, and were disposed to throw back the whole subject, with all its embarrassments, upon the faculty.

In regard to the prosecution, I entertained doubts from the beginning, as already suggested, of its expediency. As circumstances now were, I regarded it not as inexpedient merely, but unnecessary. It is fully believed, had the young gentlemen who fled been called before the committee, or the Board, that the facts would have been immediately disclosed. [25] But supposing the facts

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[24] This was not a novel case. The measures of the Board, even in circumstances of the most delicate nature, as respected the faculty of the College, and of which the scholars should have had no knowledge, have (till within a few years) seldom been concealed from them.

[25] In a conversation with one of the young gentlemen, after it was made evident that he was an accomplice in the act, I understood clearly from his insinuations that he had been directed, when at home, to return to College and

had not been disclosed by them—was not the course which the interests of the College indispensably demanded, perfectly obvious? Since the young gentlemen had most exactly marked themselves by their flight, what satisfactory apology could the Board possibly give for not saying to them, that they were all suspended from the privileges of the College till those facts were disclosed? The Board had *unanimously* pronounced the proceedings of their committee in the first instance, as *judicious*, *mild*, and *proper* in ALL respects. If this opinion was correct, where, in the whole range of our vocabulary, are appellations to be found sufficiently expressive of timidity and inconsistency to characterize the measures recommended by them in the latter instance, and adopted by the Board—or rather to characterize their conduct in not recommending further measures? Had the detection and punishment of the young men, in the view of the committee or the Board, become less desirable, as the matter respected either the College or the community? What had occurred to justify such a reverse in their opinion? They will not say, surely, the course adopted by the faculty was the cause of it? Some of the Trustees, perhaps all of them, have a distinct recollection that the chairman of the committee, in their last report, remarked to the Board, that notwithstanding the embarrassing circumstances in which the President of the College had been placed, that nothing had occurred to impair their confidence at all, in his wisdom and discretion, From what cause, then, as wise and firm men, who understood, and durst do their duty, could they *totally* abandon the strong ground they had taken? How could they think, with a proper regard for the College, of casting this subject, difficult as it was in itself, with all the additional perplexities and responsibilities which their own measures had given it, from themselves upon their faculty?

The effect of such proceedings of the Board on the feelings of the government of the Institution may in some measure be conceived. I shall not attempt to describe it. It was proposed by some of the professors that we resign our offices *en masse*. But we all came to the conclusion, on a little reflection, that personal considerations,—as critical and as trying as our situation was,—would not justify us in a course which could not but at once prostrate the institution, and that our duty required of us one more effort to save it from ruin. Considering the peculiar circumstances of the case, it was thought inexpedient to create fresh excitement among the students by an investigation before the faculty.—Whatever we had to do by way of discovery, was to be done secretly. That the institution had reached an alarming crisis, was not to be doubted. Many of the friends of order in the seminary were greatly dissatisfied, and some were determined, unless something was done, that they would not long remain with us. A

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acknowledge his guilt. I doubt not but others had been directed to do it.—And the opinion prevailed pretty generally among the scholars, that several of them, at least, would have done it, provided they had been called before the committee.

gentleman of respectability in the county, who had a son in the Institution, (an accomplice in the matter, as was soon made to appear,) declared that, unless the offenders were detected and punished, he would remove him to another College.

The opinion prevailed to a considerable extent, not only in the College but out of it, that the Board, or a majority of them, wished no farther discoveries, because, from fear or some other cause, they were unwilling the young men should be punished. And it was soon rumored abroad, that all the difficulties at the College were settled by the Corporation, and finally settled; and that the faculty had no longer any concern with them. To this rumor we gave no credit. That the Board could harbor a design, in our opinion, characteristic of almost any thing rather than of wisdom or of fidelity to the Institution, we were unable for a moment to suspect.

Within a week from the adjournment of the Board we were providentially in possession of satisfactory evidence as to all the important facts pertaining to the outrage. Of the nine individuals who had part in the matter, one had already been expelled, and another had read a confession publicly in obedience to the resolutions of the Board, and another had taken a dismission from the College. As to the six other individuals, the faculty were inclined to exercise towards them the utmost lenity which the nature of the offence and the good of the Institution would admit; and it was unanimously agreed that one of them, who had prior to this transgression made a public confession for misconduct and had also been rusticated, should be dismissed—another rusticated—and that from the rest, as it was believed to be their first overt transgression, we would accept an ingenuous public confession.[26]

Knowing from experience that as soon as it was understood in Utica that the young gentlemen were detected and punished, there would be a great uproar there, it was deemed advisable previously to visit that village, aud to apprize some of the Board living in that place of the disclosure made, and of the nature of the

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[26] At this stage of our proceedings the report reached us, that the opinion prevailed among *the scholars also*, by some means or other, that the Corporation, by their measures, had put a finishing hand to the business, and had left the government so situated that we should make no further efforts at discovery. That such must have been their opinion seems probable from the fact, that those concerned in the act remained with us after the adjournment of the Board. How, otherwise, could they have been willing, for a day, to trust themselves in our hands. It was known to them that one of their associates had received a dismission from the College, and that they also, of course, could receive one on applying for it. We did not yet believe, nor were we willing to suspect that any encouragement of indemnity had been received by them from the committee, nor from any member of the Board.—But suspicions were *soon* excited that such encouragement might have been given them. Subsequently to the adjournment, about ten days, a member of the Board remarked to me, that he strongly suspected, when the committee made their report that it was their intention to put the thing at rest; and that, on his way home, he remarked to another that *he was ashamed of their proceedings*.

testimony, that they might be prepared rightly to estimate and to correct the exaggerated representations which were likely to be made.

During an interview with the then president of the Board,—who was absent from our recent meeting by reason of the state of his health,—he remarked to me, "In one thing I think you missed it, when a committee of the scholars came and informed you on what terms the offenders would deliver themselves up." I replied, "I was not informed, Sir, that they would deliver themselve up on *any* terms. I will state to you the circumstances, and then you may judge." Having heard my statement, he replied, "Your statement does not agree with that of the boys." "So I presume, Sir," said I. "But who is to be believed, the President of your College or a company of rash young men, who are fleeing from punishment." He answered, "The President, Sir, to be sure." I then remarked to the gentleman, "If the people in Utica would only suspend forming their opinions, and refrain from giving currency to the strange reports they hear of us, till they have received the facts from ourselves, the faculty would be saved from much groundless censure, and the Institution itself from a threatening evil."[27] When this gentleman understood from me that the authors of the mischief were discovered, and that the faculty felt constrained to punish them, he remarked, "Well, I will support you." I replied, "Our path of duty is perfectly plain. I have not called to ask either advice or support. We shall receive your support, I have no fears, provided we deserve it."

In conversation with one of the late committee of the Board, he remarked, that so far as he had learned, the recent measures of the Corporation were very acceptable to the public; and wished to know how they were considered in the vicinity of the College, and by the faculty. "The people in Clinton," I replied, "regard your measures as most extraordinary; and as to the faculty, we consider our government very much paralyzed by them." I then informed him, that the young men concerned in the late act of violence were at last all detected, and that the well-being of the Institution demanded their punishment. "If you think so," the gentleman remarked, "you must punish them." "We *must* punish them," I replied. "If the Corporation support us, well—if not, your College is gone."

As soon as it was known in Utica, that the young gentlemen

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[27] I am far from insinuating that the inhabitants of Utica *generally* are unfriendly to the College. A great proportion of them, I have no doubt, are among its sincere friends. But let a few men of any influence in such a village be prone to complain of a College in its vicinity, especially if some of its Trustees residing there are in the habit of speaking light of it, and it is perfectly natural that circumstances, in themselves trivial, and when well understood no way censurable, should become the occasion of strong and general excitement, and of severe animadversion.

A Trustee of the College, living at the time some miles east of that village, once remarked before the Board, *as soon as there is any difficulty at Hamilton College the clamours raised in Utica against the faculty rush down the valley of the Mohawk like a torrent.*

had been detected and punished, there was a great clamor against us there, as had been anticipated. The young gentleman dismissed by the faculty, belonged to that village, and his connexions were numerous and of respectable standing. Shortly after his return home, a letter was received from his father, in which he complained of us for not giving his son, as he understood from him, *any reason for this step;* and stated, that he was unable to learn from him, that he was justly chargeable with any *unexpiated* offence. The communication was brought by a gentleman, by profession a lawyer, who remonstrated in strong terms against our procedure. He contended that "the young men had been tried and acquitted by the Corporation—that the faculty were an inferior court; and had, therefore, no right to try them subsequently, and to convict and punish them—that it was a vital and long established principle of civil jurisprudence, that no man be tried *twice for the same offence,*" &c.[28]

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[28] I have been not a little surprised at the sentiments, often advanced by men of information, and men too in other matters judicious, on the subject of College discipline. Notwithstanding the assurance with which their opinions are held and expressed, they seem not to have considered the matter; or, if they have considered it at all, to have done it but superficially. It seems never to have occurred to them, that the government of a Seminary of learning must, from its nature and design, be in a high degree parental—differing not essentially from the government of a family. The officers of a College have no power to inflict corporeal punishment on the youth of their charge. Parents grant them no such power; as it would be unwise for themselves to inflict such punishment on their sons who have arrived to the age of students in a public Seminary of learning. If the faculty are invested with authority to impose *pecuniary* penalties, (a measure always questionable, unless, perhaps, in case of damages) yet this authority is never exercised to any considerable extent. It is their business not merely to instruct their pupils in the branches of learning which tend to discipline, invigorate and enlarge the intellectual powers, and to supply the mind with useful knowledge, but to implant and nourish in them wholesome moral and religious principles, to form them to correct habits: and in order to attain these ends, kindly and faithfully to advise, counsel, admonish, and reprimand them if necessary; and when their efforts have proved unavailing, when a pupil continues to disregard their counsels and admonitions, to set at nought the salutary laws and regulations of the Institution, and his example has become injurious to his fellow students, nothing is left for his instructer to do, painful as the duty is, but to exclude him from their society. The government of a College, in their investigations, can employ no force, use no coercive measures, extort no evidence from a student against his fellows by imposing on him the fearful sacredness of an oath, and exposing him, in case of falsehood, to the dark and indelible stigma of perjury. True, if he refuses to give testimony, when, by his own acknowledgment, or by other means it is known to be in his power, they are authorised by the by-laws, in most Colleges, to preclude him from their privileges.

What power over their pupils, then, have the government of a College, which a parent has not over his children? And if a parent, in his enquiry, fails of obtaining evidence against a suspectedly mischievous and vicious child, may he not call that child before him the second, third or fourth time, for the purpose of interrogating him? And may he not as often call before him and interrogate his other children with the view of obtaining evidence of his innocence or guilt, and with the hope of restraining him in his career of wickedness, if found guilty, by reasonable reproof and admonition; and also of saving them from the contagion of evil example? And should he, after all, remain contumacious and incorrigible, may not a wise and faithful parent exclude him from his fam-

At a subsequent interview with the father of the young gentleman, he remarked, in substance, "There is blame somewhere, and I have reason to consider myself injured. After the meeting of the Board, my son was desirous to go to another College. But I had received assurances from some of the Board that the diffi-

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ily, for the purpose of freeing the rest of his household from an example which may ruin them?

In what consists the danger of doing this? And what would be the consequences of establishing it as a principle, that a parent must never enquire but once respecting the same offence? Let such a principle be once settled and acted upon, and who that has common sense does not see that all family government would be essentially weakened, if not wholly destroyed?

Were the same course adopted and pursued in a College, what is there to prevent the same results? It seems, as if no man, who has any regard to the estimation in which he is held by others for judgment and discretion, would think of contending for an analogy, in this respect, between the government of a College and a Court of justice. Granting the Corporation of a College to interfere themselves, or by their committee, in a case of discipline, they can exercise no power (unless rendered *peculiarly* theirs by the charter) but what they had delegated to the faculty. Supposing the Board of Trustees, then, or a committee of the same, to have held one trial, or in more appropriate language, to have made one investigation unsuccessfully, have they no power, no right, to make a second when circumstances encourage the belief, that it will be made with success? And are the faculty, when the Board have investigated—but in vain—divested of the power, by reason of it, to make further investigations? Are young men, in such circumstances, because not detected on the first enquiry, to be exempt from all future investigation, and even be invested with impunity, although they should avow their transgressions and make a boast of them? Certainly so, if the principle assumed be admitted; for the conclusion is inevitable.

If the faculty of Hamilton College, in the matter under consideration, were justly complained of, it is not to be denied that the Corporation themselves were, at least, equally censurable. The faculty, if they may be viewed as a court, must, it is true, be regarded in relation to the Board, as an inferior court. But by whom is this inferior court constituted; and under whose authority do they act? Supposing, then, the principle advocated correct, by what right did the Corporation, after a court of their own organizing, and invested with all the powers of jurisdiction which they themselves could exercise in the cause at issue, had tried and acquitted the young men—by what right, it is asked, did they arraign them before their committee and try and acquit them the second time? For they were as much tried by the faculty as by the committee; and acquitted by one as much as by the other. There is no conceivable difference in the cases. But the committee did not consider the young men as tried, in the technical sense of the term: If so, would they, after their trial, have threatened them with prosecution? Now, if the Corporation, as was declared to be the fact, can be said to have tried the young gentlemen, after the business was taken out of the hands of the faculty, it was done only by their committee; for not an individual of them was ever called up and interrogated before the Board itself. But the faculty were their court, in every respect possible, as much as their committee. Granting, then, the principle assumed and advocated by several members of the Board, and a multitude of others, the inference is irresistible, that the Corporation themselves were guilty of the high-handed and arbitrary procedure of twice trying the same individuals for the same offence.

The maxim, beyond all debate, is a vital principle of the body politic. For if a citizen of the state might be tried twice for the same offence; if he might, on the same charge, be arraigned again and again at the bar of a judicial tribunal, where is the man who could not be persecuted, and worried down and destroyed, by malice or ambition? But however important the principle, in

culties were finally settled ; that the young men were safe ; and I did not yield to the wishes of my son, because I thought it my duty to patronize our own rather than another College. After such assurances, I was surprised on learning from my son that he was publicly dismissed by the faculty.§ I immediately called on Mr. ——, (a member of the Board, but not of the committee,) who remarked to me, that the faculty had gone contrary to the decision (or views) of the Board, and that they had no right to punish the young men."

The truth was now presented in the clearest light. I do not know, nor can I believe, that *every* member of the committee, or that the Board *generally*, wished for no further developement of the facts ; nor do I know that it was suggested before the committee, that it was expedient to adopt such measures as would restrain the faculty from all further proceedings, and save the young men, not yet discovered, from conviction and punishment. But that it was the wish, the understanding, the design, of certain members of the committee, and of some other influential members of the Board, that nothing further should be done by the faculty, there could be no doubt, and the committee filled us with distressing apprehensions for the College. That a portion of the committee, or that some of the most intelligent and prominent members of the Board, should covertly attempt to bind their faculty hand and foot in such circumstances, and that the scholars or their parents should be informed by them, (whether owing to their ignorance of their official duties, or to some other cause, it makes no difference,) that the faculty were actually thus bound, is a procedure, to which I boldly challenge its likeness to be found in all the annals of our Colleges. Had I entertained the slightest sus-

§ Well might this gentleman think there was blame *somewhere*, after having received such asssurances from some of the Board. But with whom did the blame lie ?

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its application to civil society, it can have no place in a system of College government.*

Here I appeal to the judgment of the reader. Did we, as a faculty, transcend the limits of our rightful authority ? Had we, in such circumstances, done less, should we have fulfilled our duty to the Institution and to the public ? If a parent, would you trust your son in a Seminary where such crimes were connived at by its Trustees, and could be committed with impunity ?

And how can a body of men, to whose care is committed so sacred and responsible a trust as a public Institution of learning ; with whose kind, uniform and strict discipline are essentially connected its purity, its morals, its sound and wholesome science, and of consequence all the benefits which it is designed to confer on the church and on the state—how can the whole body, or any individual of that body, plead even the semblance of an apology for such proceedings ?

*I shall be excused, I make no doubt, where the circumstances are known, for saying so much to shew the want of adaptedness in the principle to the case in hand. The truth is, the faculty in this proceeding were accused of an unwarrantable assumption of authority. Their conduct was a subject of severe reprehension. Complaints, on this ground, were spread through the country, and proved a prolific source of deep-rooted prejudices.

picion, when the report was made, that such an intention was harbored by the committee, and my remonstrance had proved unavailing, I do not hesitate to say that there was not a member of the faculty, who had not too much respect for his own character, and too sacred a regard for his duty, to hold his office a single day.

The friends of the young gentleman dismissed, were now desirous for his admission to some other College. It was ascertained that their object could be attained, provided the President of Hamilton College would request it. My agency, of course, was solicited; and I was consulted by two members of the Board. My answer was, that if the faculty of any other College were willing to receive the young gentleman, we should make no objection, and should not, I believe it was added, consider it a ground of offence; but that we could request the government of no College to do an act for us, which we could not, consistently with our views of duty to our own, do for them; that by doing the act requested, we should implicitly pledge our agency, if requested, in assisting every young man whom we should send away, to an introduction to another College; that by this means, what was designed as punishment would cease to be such—our laws rendered nugatory, the restraints of mischief removed, and the arm of government paralyzed.

At the ensuing commencement, a motion was made, and earnestly advocated by several members of the corporation, to confer on the young gentleman the honours of the College, with his class. It was acknowledged by one member that he was placed in very delicate and embarrassing circumstances; and he remarked that some other gentlemen of the Board were in the same circumstances (i. e. that the father of the young man, as was clearly implied —and others no doubt, had been given to understand from them that the young men were safe): and he argued that the Trustees, if for no other reason, ought to give the young gentleman a degree, in order to relieve them under their embarrassments. After a discussion of some length, it was voted by a majority of the Board to grant him a dismission, in accordance with a request of his father previously made of the faculty; but saying nothing of his conduct and standing as a scholar. Thus terminated the deliberations and measures, in relation to the discharging and bursting of the cannon.[29]

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[29] It is a law of human nature to press upon the boundaries prescribed to it, and to resist all encroachments upon our liberties, and especially upon that liberty which is the fruit of our own exertions. In no class of men probably is this propensity stronger than in that portion of the youth of every College who are governed more by the impulse of feeling and their inherent love of independence than by sober reason and reflection.

After it was known by the young gentlemen that the prosecution with which they had been threatened by the committee was given up—that the whole affair was passed over in silence, and no further measures likely to be taken by the Board for their detection—it was natural for them to conceive they had gained a complete triumph over both the Corporation and the faculty. Any one who had viewed the prejudices of men and the stirrings of the human passions with an attentive eye, would naturally have expected that in such cir-

God who *gathereth the wind in his fists*, and calmeth the raging of the tempest, seemed to appear at last for the deliverance of the College. During the winter 1824—5, the Institution experienced a *time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord*, the most powerful and genuine, to human view, that I ever witnessed in any College. There was a stillness, a solemnity, within its walls, as the stillness and solemnity of the house of mourning. Every countenance seemed to say (where but twelve months before was little else than a scene of lawlessness and disorder,) *How awful*

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cumstances they would feel more than their ordinary impatience under the most salutary restraints; and that any measures adopted by the faculty to bring them to the usual state of order and subjection, would be evaded by the most wakeful vigilance, and resisted with a settled and unyielding determination.

The spirit of opposition to the government subsequently was manifested in a degree which, to myself, was totally unexampled, in cutting and otherwise marring the seats and railing of the chapel; in breaking the windows, doors and stairs of the colleges; in writing on the walls, and disfiguring them with indecent characters and images. In consequence of this occurrence, nearly twenty scholars were dismissed from the Institution, and many of them in compliance with advice privately given to their parents. But their removal was but a partial remedy of the evil. Some who remained still cherished the same feelings. The *esprit du corps* is no where, perhaps, more felt than in a College. Its inmates,—occupied in the same pursuits,—having in some measure a common interest,—ardent and generous in their feelings,—deeply participating in each other's fortunes,—are strongly and tenderly allied by some of the best principles of our nature; and an excitement once created among them is transmitted from breast to breast, and from class to class, and with the rapidity of lightning pervades and animates the whole community.

Nor is a spirit of disorder and resistance to authority, when once engendered, felt by those only who are the immediate subjects of it. Long after they are gone it is liable to be imbibed and nourished by their successors. So true is this, that the firing and bursting of the cannon has ever been regarded by a portion of the students as an era in the history of the College; and the night of the year on which it occurred has never passed in a single instance (excepting the last and present year,) without some unusual disorders as a commemoration of the event. That the spirit of licentiousness and misrule introduced and encouraged by the proceedings consequent on that transaction has, in a measure, ever since existed among us, is abundantly evident from the appearance of the doors, walls and other interior parts of the buildings.—From that time till recently the achievement of a scheme of mischief, when once conceived by them, seems to have been resolved on at all hazards. Animated by the example and success of their predecessors, and actuated by a vain and silly ambition of shewing themselves able to do what others have done before them, some have been known to declare that they would not, and *could not* be defeated in their plans; and there has been a small number in almost every class whom neither the vigilance and exertions of the faculty, nor the precautionary means of the inspector, have proved sufficient to restrain from the accomplishment of their designs.

Let it be remembered, however, that the proportion of our young men who have inherited and exhibited this spirit has been small, very small--but large enough to affect seriously the tranquillity and reputation of the College. I assert with confidence, and I take great pleasure in doing it, that the greater part, and much the greater part of them, have been actuated by a widely different spirit: that in regard to industry and success in their studies, and to their moral and intellectual worth, they would not suffer in comparison with the youth of any College with which I have been connected; and that the conduct of their rash and inconsiderate inmates, has been to them a source of deep mortification and regret.

is this place! More than twenty of our young men, in the judgment of charity, were made partakers of the grace of life. Some of this number had shewn in a high degree a spirit of restlessness and turbulence, and an unyielding opposition to the government.

The fruits of such a visitation of the special mercy of God are not liable to be misapprehended. Schemes of mischief were abandoned. The resorts of thoughtlessness and mirth were relinquished for the religious conference and prayer meeting. The apprehensions long felt by many of the Institution's friends were in a measure dissipated. Christians *thanked God and took courage:* they again believed that Hamilton College was destined yet to become, what they had long been praying it might be, a fruitful nursery of sound learning not only, but of evangelical truth and vital godliness, and a distinguished instrument of good to the church and to the world.

From this time till the summer of 1826, the College was in an unusually tranquil, and it was generally believed, prosperous state. At a meeting of the association of the alumni, at the commencement, in August of this year, one of the young gentlemen who, but a few hours previous, had been admitted to the honors of the College, rose and remarked, "that there was an obstacle to the prosperity of the Institution; that *some* of his class had held *frequent conversations* on the subject, and that while it remained as it then was, he could advise no young man to become a member of it." He was called upon by the presiding officer to explain himself. A classmate of his replied, "that the evil alluded to might perhaps be remedied, by the appointment of a professor of Moral Philosophy, or of Divinity.

The obstacle alluded to by the young gentleman was not suspected generally by the alumni who were present. But those who were acquainted with the peculiar religious state of the College and vicinity, for a few months preceding, had no doubt as to his intention. Soon after the commencement, reports were found to be in circulation in some places, seriously implicating the ability of the President; viz.—*that he was superanuated*, and *that the scholars were dissatisfied with his instruction.* It was evident, beyond doubt, that some persons were actively engaged in giving currency to these reports.[30]

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[30] As to the origin of these reports, we are not left to conjecture. It is well known that a few individuals of the class, who were graduated at commencement, complained openly of the President a few days subsequently, in the neighborhood of the College; and that rumors seriously affecting his official character, soon prevailed wherever *they* went, and no where else, so far as we have been able to learn, till nine or ten months afterwards. It has never been suspected that the class, with the exception of a very small number, had any agency in these rumors; nor that they were not, in general, as well satisfied with their President as any preceding class had been. Indeed the disaffection towards him, was owing principally, as has since been said by several of the first young men then in College, to the exertions of a single individual—the same young man who remarked before the alumni that some of his class had held frequent *conversations* on the state of the College. In a letter addressed to the President by this young gentleman, December following, although he expresses great affection and respect for him, yet he objects to the

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TRUSTEES—*May 8th*, 1827.

Present—Rev. Drs. Norton and Brown, Simeon Ford, Wm. Floyd, G. Bristoll, J. K. Lothrop, H. McNeil, G. Smith, and S. Hopkins, Esqrs. and Rev. J. Eells, J. Frost, N. Coe, and H. Davis.

During the meeting, Mr. Ford rose and remarked, "that the College was in an alarming state; that reports, it was said, were

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use made of text books in the recitations of the senior class,—prescribes to him the method of instruction which he ought to pursue,—tells him "the subjects of the lesson should be given out, and the class left to get and give such ideas as they pleased, and from any source;" and says, "that for two or three years past, the disaffection in the senior class has been quite general on this subject."* He also prescribes to him the measures proper to be adopted, that he may avoid "the unpleasant, or rather unharmonious consequences, which (he says) there is reason to fear he may sooner or later meet with, considering what kind of men sit in the Board of Trustees. At any rate, such things (he adds) have been anticipated by several of my class." It was not known to myself, perhaps to *no one* of the faculty, till several months after the young man was graduated, that some of his class, during the remarkable religious excitement which prevailed in its vicinity, the last summer they were in College, had prayed for their President, *as an old grey-headed sinner, leading his scholars down to hell!* But the reports which were circulated, would, *of themselves*, have produced a lasting evil to the College. It is firmly believed they would soon have subsided, and that scarce a single young man, in consequence of them, would have been prevented from entering the Institution.

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*I have yet to learn that any young gentlemen, excepting the above individual and a few of his classmates, have ever expressed any serious dissatisfaction as to my instruction. During the season of darkness which the Institution has experienced, a great number, lately my pupils, have voluntarily assured me, that it is not true that the scholars were dissatisfied with me as an instructer, as had been reported—that the complaint was, so far as any existed, that I had so much to do—that there was not an additional professor to relieve me of a part of my burden, and who could also give them a course of lectures on Rhetoric during their last year. Some have further remarked, "We all knew that the government of the College rested very much on you, and no one had reason to complain that you did not attempt to do more, the complaint was against the Corporation for not furnishing you with more assistance, not against you." Indeed, one or two of those, who, it is believed, were concerned in the *conversations* alluded to, have expressed themselves to me in a similar manner. Even the young gentleman in his letter, speaks of the importance of a professor of Divinity, on the same account. He remarks, in relation to my duties in the government, &c.—"They bring a large burden of care upon the President—a burden quite sufficient for one man to bear, without the additional task of hearing the semi-daily recitations of a class in the Institution." He further remarks, "I feel extremely anxious to see Hamilton College rise, and if the Trustees would exert themselves faithfully, it might rise, and that too, in harmony. I expected to have had a conversation with you respecting the College, before I left Clinton; but your early departure for New-England, deprived me of the opportunity. The principal subject on which I wished to converse was, the appointment of a professor of Divinity. I thought I could give some reasons which would increase your exertions to procure the endowment of the professorship. The subject has borne with such weight upon my mind, that I have concluded to write a few lines, &c. The greatest danger would be in fixing upon the right man (viz. for a professor). One below middle age would do much better than one above." Now this young man, be it remembered, had but just left the College, *as wise* as he seems to be, *in his own conceit.*

circulated by some young men, who had recently gone from the Institution, injurious to the reputation of its President, and, if what I have heard,' said the gentleman, 'of one of our professors is true, I am prepared to cut him off this day.' [31] He then in-

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[31] As to the object of Mr. Ford, no one doubted.* What he had heard, previous to the meeting, of the professor alluded to, I knew not: but he came to the meeting, as I am assured, with a determination to move for the appointment of such a committee. Soon after his arrival, and before business was commenced, it was whispered among the members present that the professor alluded to had stated in a letter addressed to Mr. Smith, but a few days previous, that the scholars were leaving the College, and the Institution rapidly declining, owing to their dissatisfaction with the President.

A few weeks after the meeting, I requested Mr. S. to send me the letter; assuring him the professor himself should first see it, and no one else without his permission. Under these restrictions, my request was granted. The professor gave me permission to show his letter to the other members of the faculty, and to any one else if I desired it. He remarked, 'he was willing it should be published if it would do good; and his only wish respecting it, was, that it might be returned, at commencement, to the gentleman to whom it was addressed.' In consequence of these remarks, I felt myself at liberty to take an exact copy of it; and I now deem it my duty, believing in view of all that has taken place that it will do good, to present it to the public.

"Ham. Coll. 23d April, 1827.

My Dear Sir,—I am very happy to address you, as a guardian of the Institution in which I am labouring. Its interests, I trust, are dear to you, not merely from any partiality which you may have cherished in its favor, but chiefly because it may be made an eminent blessing to our country and to mankind. Apprehensive that you might not be fully acquainted with its present condition, before the meeting of the Board, I felt it my duty to premise to you some things, which no doubt will then be a subject of discussion. With regard to the state of the College, it is somewhat singular. Since my connexion with it, we have had no more pleasant year than what has elapsed of the present. The faculty have been perfectly harmonious, and the students, almost without exception, orderly and industrious. Yet within a week five of our best young men have taken dismissions, and are going to Union. As you may well suppose, I have been careful to inquire after the cause, and I have no doubt ascertained it. One cause which immediately operates, is the rigidity with which we pursue pure mathematics, of which only a few individuals in a class can be fully master and maintain a good standing. They think that so much of the mathematics is not necessary, nor practical; and according to the present course and method of instruction, they feel as if they could not hold their expected standing. But there is another objection, which cannot be so easily removed. They say that for three years in this College, the instruction is equal to any in the U. States; but that during the fourth year it is *greatly* deficient. It has been with great pain that I have heard this objection made by the senior classes, for the two years past. For I am persuaded that the venerable and amiable gentleman on whom that year's instruction entirely depends, is as faithful and diligent as his health will permit. But it is my thorough conviction, that unless some remedy is speedily applied, the usefulness of the College will soon be at an end. And why should this be? I doubt whether there is another seminary in the U. States, which possesses more advantages for being, with proper management, ex-

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* Hitherto, I have not named the members of the Board who have borne prominent parts in the transactions related. They are not all among the living; and I am unwilling to disturb the sanctuary of the dead. If any gentleman should request, in a proper manner, to know of me whether he is among the number implicated—and if so, to what extent—his request shall be complied with, so far as he is concerned.

troduced the following resolution, viz: "That a committee be appointed to inquire into the state of the College in general, and

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tensively useful. But the state of the times requires that our course of instruction should be more practical, and the method of communicating instruction might be somewhat improved.

My time does not permit me to visit you, but if it were convenient, I should be glad to see you previous to the meeting of the Board. I know of no way in which satisfaction can be given to our youth and to the public, with regard to our course of instruction, than by the appointment of another professor; a capable man who shall give lectures on rhetoric. This I suppose to be contemplated in the project of a Divinity professor. But how shall this project be accomplished? Unless it is accomplished soon, I am persuaded, the College will be reduced so low that it will require more vigorous effort, and greater expense to raise it to its proper standing. [But how was this project of a Rhetorical professorship to be accomplished? Was he afraid, as many believe, that a professorship of Divinity would prove an obstacle to the success of his wishes?]

A circumstance very injurious to our reputation, I suppose, is the fact of a valuable College building, entirely unoccupied. To obviate this evil, and to gain some other advantages, it has been proposed to have the Medical College removed from Fairfield here; or at all events to establish one here. It is believed that this measure would be generally highly approved by the medical profession in the western part of the state, as well as by those in this county.

With high respect and affection, Yours, &c.

JOHN MONTEITH.

GERRIT SMITH, ESQ."

Having conversed with the professor privately, in relation to his letter, and receiving no concessions from him, I introduced the subject in presence of the faculty. The following is the substance, if not the identical language, of my remarks and interrogatories, and of his replies and vindication, so far as he attempted any; as the faculty bear me witness.

You remark in your letter, "the faculty, during the part of the year that has elapsed, have been perfectly harmonious." This, it appears to me, is singular information for you to communicate to a member of the Board. The faculty ought, and are expected to be *always* harmonious. And there has certainly been no want of harmony among us, since you have been here, excepting what you yourself have been the cause of. Have you not complained repeatedly to the faculty of the Sophomore class, since the commencement of the present year? Have you not often informed us that you had admonished and fined several of them, again and again—that you could not induce them to attend the exercises—that you knew not what to do with them? Did you not remember that other members of the faculty had made similar complaints of certain members of this and of other classes, though not, by any means to the same extent? It is a fact that no officer, since my connexion with the Institution, has made such frequent complaints of any class, for the want of industry and punctuality, as you did of the Sophomore class, during the last two terms, at the close of which your letter was written. How, then, in such circumstances could you say, as an honest man, that "the students through the whole year, thus far, had been orderly and industrious almost without exception?"

[I was surprised and grieved at this remark of the professor. For in consequence of *his* complaints *chiefly*, I had called several of the young men to my study, and privately counselled and admonished them; and some of them repeatedly.]

particularly in relation to the government and course of instruction therein, and the conduct and demeanor of the several officers thereof,

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You knew that Dr. Noyes, through the second term, delivers five lectures a week to the Senior Class, in his department, and Professor Strong a course of lectures in *his* department, during the last term. On what grounds, then, could you assert *positively* that the instruction of the Senior year depends *entirely* on the President? Did you not say to me, not a week before your letter was written I am confident, you was *fully* persuaded from inquiries you had made, 'the sole reason of the young gentlemen's leaving us was, that they were averse to the study of so much Mathematics?' How, then, at this very time, could you insinuate to Mr. Smith, in a manner not to be misunderstood, "that the *principal* reason of their going to another College was, the deficiency in our instruction during the Senior year?"

The professor made no direct reply to either of these questions.

You say, "It has been with great pain that I have heard this objection made (i. e. the deficiency of the instruction in the fourth year) by the Senior classes for the two or three years past." (Mark the correspondence between the professor's phraseology, "this objection made by the Senior class for the two or three years past," and that of the young man in his letter, "for two or three years past the dissaffection," &c. (See note 30.) It is evident from your language, that you are in the habit of conversing with the scholars respecting the competency of their instructers. You, *yourself*, you say, "have heard this objection made by the Senior classes." He declared that he had not; and that he had conversed with but one young gentleman only (then a member of the Junior class); and for the purpose of ascertaining why his class-mates had taken dismissions. How, then, (I asked) did you obtain your information? He replied, I got it from the people in my kitchen, who received it in the village. Do you, then, (said I,) converse with the people in your kitchen respecting the concerns of the college? Do you rely upon complaints received from them, and which they had received from their associates in the village, against your companions in office, and communicate them to the Trustees of the College as matters of fact? Did you never converse about me with ——? (the young man who threw out his insinuations before the alumni, at commencement 1826, and whose letter to me has just been alluded to.) He answered, that he 'believed he had once; but whether before or after he was graduated, he was not confident.' Has he never written to you on the subject since he left college? The professor acknowledged that he had said something about it in a letter, written *principally*, however, on a different subject. The gentleman to whom your letter was addressed, remarked to me, before I saw it, that you spoke very respectfully of the President. And what did you say in his favor?—merely that he is *venerable* and *amiable*, and *as faithful and diligent* as his health will permit. You represent the prospects of the College, Sir, in most respects, as highly propitious: the faculty *perfectly harmonious*—the scholars *orderly* and *industrious* almost without exception—the instruction *for three years*, in the opinion of the scholars, equal to any in the United States; [did the professor learn this the same way in which he learned the deficiency as to the instruction the fourth year?] and yet, owing solely to the deficiency in the President's department, the Institution is on the eve of dissolution. And what is the remedy prescribed by you for this alarming deficiency?—Verily, nothing but a course of lectures from some capable man, on Rhetoric. This was to satisfy our scholars and the public, and save the Institution from the ruin which threatened it.

'Had you said to Mr. S. that such a course of lectures would be highly important to the Seminary, we should all have subscribed cordially to the justness of the opinion. But where is the justice of attributing this deficiency *exclusively* to the President? of insinuating unequivocally, that the Institu-

and in particular, in relation to any suggestions which may have been made by one officer, unfavorable to another, and derogatory to

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tion, in consequence of *his* deficiency alone, will soon be at an end? The President is no more professor of Rhetoric than you are—it is no more his duty to give lectures on this subject than yours. Let any man read your letter, who is acquainted with the circumstances in which we were for the last twelve months preceding the date of it, and he would be persuaded, at the first view, that your object in writing it was to degrade the president in the estimation of the gentleman addressed.'

The professor was much embarrassed, and said but little during the whole interview. He disavowed all intention of injuring the President. He remarked—'I see my situation: I had *no expectation* the gentleman would show my letter to any one; had I expected it, I should have written with *more caution*.'

Dr. Brown, on his way to commencement, called on the clergyman of Mr. Smith's village. Mr. S. himself was absent. The clergyman informed Dr. B. of the letter, recently received by Mr. S. from Professor M., and of the character of it: that Mr. S. immediately brought it to him, and expressed great alarm for the fate of the College—that he was surprised to learn that the scholars were dissatisfied with the President. Mr. S. and the clergyman both took it for granted, from the letter, that the young men had left the Institution solely on account of the supposed incompetency of the President, and that for the same reason, it was rapidly running down. Such was the impression of Dr. B. till his arrival at the College.

I would gladly have avoided introducing this subject. But it is confidently believed by many well acquainted with the circumstances, that the conduct of this officer tended, in no inconsiderable degree, to produce a state of things which furnished certain members of the Board with the semblance of an apology for the introduction of those measures which emptied the College of its occupants. I do not say, nor do I know, that the professor *intentionally* countenanced the *conversations* of *some* of the class who were graduated in 1826, or that they were designedly encouraged by him in their treatment of some of the faculty, before or after they had left the Institution. But that they were greatly influenced by his feelings and example, there is little reason to doubt. It is a fact, that *some* of the class were indulged by him in the most familiar intercourse, and that in all his unofficial interviews with them they were treated by him as his equals and companions. Both he and they were subjects of a remarkable degree of excitement. His conduct was matter of surprise and regret to other members of the faculty, and a subject of frequent conversation among them.

It was these *same* members of the class, without question, who were concerned in the *conversations*, who prayed for the President (one or more of them) in the manner before stated, and who circulated the unfavorable reports of him after they were graduated. In the former revivals in this College during my presidency, and in the revivals at Middlebury during my presidency there, no such prayers were made. Nor has such language as was used by professor Monteith publicly in the chapel, on the Sabbath, been used by any other professor, viz.—'*Thou knowest, O Lord, that the faculty of Hamilton College have sinned in high places; and we pray thee, O Lord, if they are obstacles to thy work, that thou wouldst remove them out of thy way.*' When asked by me—'Do you verily believe the Holy Ghost constrained you to pray and preach in such a manner?' he replied instantly—'I do.' Language the same in import was frequently used by him in prayer; and his preaching, for a time, was of a similar character. Nowhere else have I witnessed the appearance of such a spirit, or had such an opposition to encounter from any of my brethren, as has been manifested by some of them *here* both in the Board of Trustees and out of it.

his character, in any manner, and that they report thereon, at the next meeting of the Board." The resolution was adopted, and a committee appointed, consisting of Gen. McNiel, Mr. Lothrop, Gen. Kirkland, Mr. Bronson, Dr. Brown, Dr. Hopkins, and Mr. Coe. But Dr. Brown was not able to meet the committee, and had no agency in their report. Previous to the adjournment of the Board, Mr. Ford resigned his seat, as he was about to remove to a remote part of the state.

From the appointment of this committee till the ensuing commencement, the county of Oneida was filled with fresh rumours respecting the College. It seemed to be everywhere reported that the Institution was on the verge of ruin: it was said that the Corporation were about to adopt efficient measures to save it from desolation; that the President would resign at commencement; that the faculty would be dismissed; that the scholars were dissatisfied, &c. Certain members of the Board were reiterating, (to my certain knowledge)—'*Something must be done.*' I asked Dr. Hopkins, who lives less than a mile from the College, what evidence he had that the scholars were dissatisfied. His only reply was—'*They* (i. e. the Trustees in Utica) *say so.*' Mr. Lothrop, another member of the committee, remarked to me—'*We are going to make a complete change;*' but did not tell me what the change was. Gen. Kirkland wrote to Dr. Brown, as the general himself informed me, *that the College could not be worse off, and that it was perfectly safe to make an experiment.*—See note 32. In Utica, especially, the College seemed to have become an object of deep concern. Great pains appeared to be taken by *some* individuals in that village to convince the public that the Institution was in desperate circumstances.

The necessary effects of such rumors and observations were soon experienced. It was ascertained at commencement that ten or twelve young gentlemen of one school, who had determined on entering this college, were induced, by the reports which had recently reached them, respecting measures contemplated by the Board of Trustees, and changes that were to be introduced, to change their purpose and go elsewhere. And it was reported and

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With regard to the *new measures*, as they have been called, which have been introduced into many of our churches, I had, from the beginning, with a great majority of my brethren throughout this country, fearful apprehensions for their consequences. Embracing the views of President Edwards, on the subject of revivals, as according substantially with the Scriptures, we could not conscientiously co-operate in the use of the *new measures* with our brethren who approved them. But by the advocates of these measures even the silence of some of us was regarded as opposition, and as sure evidence of our being enemies to all revivals. The present distracted state of many of our churches furnishes proof painful and irresistible, that our apprehensions were not groundless.

Repeatedly has it been said, (and by some of the *new school* too) that the opposition to me from some of my brethren in the Board, and the fall of Hamilton College, are owing to the fact, 'that the College was not regarded as favorable to the *Oneida revival.*' I have anxiously sought for a cause of their opposition to me less wounding to my feelings, but, with the exception of a single individual, (Mr. Dwight) I have sought it in vain.

believed, that some young men, who were on their way to commencement, with the view of entering the College, were advised for the same reasons to return home.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

In the latter part of the week preceding commencement, the report of the committee was brought to me by Gen. McNiel, their chairman, and Gen. Kirkland, President of the Board of Trustees. The substance of which was, that they had inquired respecting the conduct of the professor alluded to by the member who moved for the appointment of the committee; that nothing improper, of a specific character, appeared in his conduct; that it was found, on examining the state of the treasury, that their productive fund amounted to but $15,000, which yielded from $800 to $1,000 annually; that, in the opinion of the committee, the faculty of every College ought to be supported by the income from tuition; that the tuition of 100 scholars would amount to $2,550; that it appeared, however, from the treasurer's books, that he had collected, during the last two years, but from $1,600 to $1,700 annually; that the income from the permanent fund was about sufficient to pay the salaries of the treasurer and secretary, and all the incidental expenses of the Institution; and that the room rent should be reserved for extraordinary repairs.

In these circumstances, the committee recommended to the Board to offer the faculty the fees of tuition in lieu of their salaries, which it was stated amounted to nearly $5000—and provided this offer should not be accepted by the faculty, that the Board proceed to elect a new faculty, who should rely, as far as *practicable*, for support on the *number* of scholars. The committee recommended, also, some changes as to the studies, and proposed specific directions as to the mode in which instruction should be given—that the professor who should be employed principally in giving instruction in the languages, should be able to teach the French and Spanish also, *without*, perhaps, the pronunciation—that —— number of rooms be fitted up to enable the scholars to spend the hours of study with their instructers—that the services of tutors should be dispensed with—that there should be three professors only in the Seminary, and but two vacations during the year, of three weeks each. [32]

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[32] It is worthy of remark, that notwithstanding no individual of the committee,—with the exception of Dr. Brown, who did not act with them,—had ever had the least experience in the instruction and discipline of a College; yet the faculty, several of whom, from their youth, had been constantly occupied in this business, were in no instance consulted, nor the opinion of any one of them asked, in relation to a single measure they were about recommending, or to a single alteration as to the course of discipline and studies.—Why this total neglect of the faculty? True it is, the report of the committee, when *completed*, was shown to the President, three or four days before it was presented to the Board. But for what purpose was it shown him at this hour?

It seemed, from the nature of the report, that the exhausted state of the treasury had recently been discovered by the committee; whereas a similar

The board assembled at 10 o'clock on Monday, and continued its session till 10 o'clock Tuesday evening. Present seventeen

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statement, but not so appalling, had been repeatedly made before by the treasurer. I was convinced that the committee were careful to present, as far as could be done without manifest design, the most alarming account of the treasury, with the hope of inducing the faculty to resign, and of persuading the Board to accept their report and to farm out the Institution. This conviction I often expressed.

In August, 1829, our present treasurer, Mr. Williams, who had recently been called to his office, and had investigated the state of the funds with much care, reported that, after satisfying all demands against the Corporation, and making all due allowance for bad debts, there would be remaining a permanent fund of $25,000, about one half of which was productive. The expense of sustaining the College in operation the two preceding years, in consequence of the loss of tuition, by driving off the scholars, (as will hereafter appear,) was $4,000 at least more than its income. So that the permanent fund, at the time of the report, must have been $29,000; and the productive part of it was probably about $3,000 greater than was stated by the committee. Why was nothing said of 3,000 acres of land belonging to the College?—one lot of which, of 200 acres, the treasurer had long before remarked, could be sold for $1,200 in cash, at any time. Why so partial and incorrect a statement of the actual funds of the Institution? The investigation of this subject was neither expressed nor contemplated in the resolution for the appointment of the committee. Their service in this particular was entirely *gratuitous*. Is it not natural to believe that, *thus* acting, they would have felt themselves under peculiar obligations to give the Board a full and exact exhibition of the state of their finances? Can *such* a report as was made be ascribed to a want of accuracy or of attention in men long accustomed to the business of banks and attorneys' offices?

During my interview with these gentlemen, I expressed strong fears as to the consequences of dispensing with the services of tutors. Gen. Kirkland remarked in reply, 'that he thought some one of the most judicious of the Senior class might be placed in every section of the College, and invested with some sort of watch or authority over his associates; and that the College, by this means, would not suffer for want of tutors, so far as its government was concerned.' He also remarked, 'that he would raise the fees of tuition: that he would have no *paupers* in the College.' (It was presumed he alluded to beneficiaries of Education Societies. But he explained himself on a future occasion before the Board, and said *it was his intention to comprehend in his remark all young men who are destitute of property.*) Nothing, at this time, was suggested by these members of the committee, implying a want of confidence in the ability or faithfulness of the faculty. Indeed, it was remarked by General Kirkland—'We don't wish to get rid of you—but our money is gone: we will farm out the College to you; we will keep every thing in repair; we will attend commencements; but the fees of tuition is all we can give you: you can't have a cent more: if you can collect it, well—if not, you must be the losers.' I asked the gentlemen, 'What is the complaint against the College? Have we not the reputation of making good scholars?' 'Yes,' replied Gen. K. 'you make as good scholars, I don't doubt, as they do at Yale, and, in some respects better—but, somehow or other, the College don't prosper. I wrote to Dr. Brown that the College could not be worse off, and therefore it was perfectly safe to make an experiment.' The following is extracted from the report of the Regents on the state of the College, 1825:

"The condition of Hamilton College," says the report, "equals the most

members, viz: Messrs. Kirkland, Lothrop, Norton, Kendrick, Brown, Lansing, McNiel, Gold, Hopkins, Keep, Smith, Eells,

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sanguine expectations entertained for its prosperity. The faculty consists of the President, three professors, and the requisite number of tutors. The number of pupils in the different classes the present year, is 105. This Institution has increased in reputation, and now affords its patrons very flattering prospects of continued usefulness, in the promotion of science, and diffusion of literary knowledge." This report of the Regents was made to the legislature about one year and six months prior to the general's communication to Dr. Brown; and was founded on facts derived principally, it is presumed, from a committee of the Corporation. The Institution had experienced in the mean time, as appears from its catalogues, a diminution of fifteen scholars. If the General's opinion was correct, what a wonderful change in the prospects of the College, considering the nature of the cause! I leave the General, should these facts meet his eye, to his own reflections, and my other readers to their own conclusions.

Those members of the committee who, it is believed, were *principally*, if not *alone* concerned in devising this *experiment*, had all been Trustees of the Institution from its organization. Is it not remarkable that they should have discovered at this late period, after having exhausted their treasury to support the Institution, (and *in vain*, if their own declaration may be relied on,) that the faculty of every College ought to be supported by the fees of tuition *alone*?

In proof of the soundness of this opinion, Amherst College was adduced by the gentlemen, I believe, on this occasion: it certainly was adduced subsequently before the Board. The faculty of this Institution, it was said, were thus supported. It appears, from the annual catalogue of that Institution, that the number of scholars then [1827,] was 170. In the summer of 1828 the number was 210. The tuition of *this* number, as I was informed by the President at that period, was sufficient, with the room rent, [probably nearly $2,000] to pay the salaries of their officers.

But grant the information which had been received, correct—where was the ground for comparison, in the circumstances of the Institutions? What are the facts in regard to Amherst? Considerations of a religious nature, it is well known, had operated powerfully in its favor. Its Board of Trustees, and a multitude of others, with perfect harmony of sentiment, of feeling, and of action, had made unwearied exertions for its establishment and advancement. It had received, it is true, no endowment from the state; but the foundation on which it rested was far better—the attachment and zeal of the enlightened and Christian public. The pecuniary aid which it had received from benevolent individuals, was without a parallel, considering its age, in the history of our Colleges. By these means, with the blessing of God upon them, it had in a few years become a highly flourishing Institution, and was equalled, as to numbers, by two Colleges only in the United States.

Look now at Hamilton. It was founded, it was thought, in highly propitious circumstances. It received at, and soon after its foundation, a very liberal endowment. The public sentiment was strong in its favor. From these circumstances, and from its local advantages, it must soon, it was presumed, become a great Institution. But in what state do we find it, after a fifteen years' experiment? According to the report of the committee, its treasury almost empty—the current of public opinion setting forcibly against it—and the Institution, as asserted by them, and extensively reported, fast sinking to ruin.

Now if the Board of Trustees, with all the facilities in their power, and with all their wisdom and enterprise, had not been able to sustain the Institution,—if it was now, as many of them avowed, and as it seemed they wished others to believe, on the brink of ruin; could the committee possibly imagine that the faculty would see any inducement to accept their proposition? If for two years, during the former of which there were 100 scholars, and the latter 90,

Coe, Aikin, Frost, Davis, Dwight. The report of the committee having been heard, it was proposed that it be presented to the faculty; for the purpose of ascertaining, no doubt, whether they would accept the fees of tuition. But the proffer was promptly rejected by the faculty.

I was soon after requested before the Board to state my views of the College, and the measures which, in my opinion, ought to be adopted. My remarks, in compliance with the request, were in substance as follows: It is not to be denied, Mr. President, that the prospects of the Institution are somewhat alarming; but I see no reason to think them so appalling as has been represented. As to the number of scholars, we have experienced no greater diminution than most other Colleges. We have admitted, during the last five or six years, from thirty to thirty-six annually. No complaint, to our knowledge, is made of the scholarship of our young men. It has been understood from the professors in our Theological Seminaries, who have the best opportunity of judging, that they do not suffer in comparison with the graduates of other Colleges. I know of no course for us but the one which has been adopted by other Institutions, in similar circumstances, and adopted successfully. (Here I enumerated several instances.) Instead of diminishing, we ought to increase our means of instruction. Let a general application for pecuniary aid be made to enlightened and benevolent individuals, and there can be no doubt as to its success. It is well known that many have long thought that a professor of Divinity is greatly needed in the Institution. With but a partial effort in this region $4000 have recently been subscribed towards a permanent fund for the support of such an officer. If proper exertions were made a sum sufficient for this purpose, there is no reason to doubt, might be obtained within a moderate period. Provided this office were endowed and filled by an able man, our course of studies somewhat altered and increased, and the method of instruction in some departments rendered a little more practical, nothing else, it is firmly believed, would be necessary to place the Institution on a more respectable footing, but the united and vigorous exertions of the Trustees and the faculty. [33]

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the treasurer had collected but from $1600 to $1700 annually, was it better than an insult to the judgment of the faculty to believe that, when the College was in such circumstances, (as bad off in the General's opinion as it could be,) they would accept the fees of tuition? And is it less an insult to the understanding of the committee to suppose they *believed* the faculty would do it, unless it is supposed they *also* believed that the faculty were indeed *all* in their dotage?

And can it be believed possible, (judging from the nature of the resolution,) that the gentleman who introduced it had any intention of giving the committee the powers which they exercised? Did the letter or spirit of the resolution warrant the exercise of those powers? Could the committee, as judicious men, have conceived, as the circumstances of the case were, and acting under such a resolution, of making *such* a report, unless confident that, by the weight of their *personal* influence, they could induce the Board to adopt any measures which they should recommend?

[33] The reasons alleged by the committee, in their preamble, for the expediency of the course recommended, were, the languishing condition of the

The measure next adopted was a *free conversation*, as it was called, on the state of the College: and it was said to me by Mr. Dwight, and I believe by one or two others of the *reformers*, that as some things of a personal nature, which it would be unpleasant for me to hear, would be brought into view, it might be expedient for me to retire. [34] It was now early in the evening; and notwithstanding the session was continued through that evening, and

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College, and the exhausted state of the treasury. But if the Board had exhausted a well replenished treasury in vain, was it the part of wise men to expect that public confidence was to be regained by the adoption of a new plan —to be carried on still under their direction, and without funds?

But the chief argument was the state of the treasury. But could this consideration, viewing all the circumstances of the College, justify such a measure? With a fund, according to their own statement, producing about $1,000 annually; with buildings (besides an elegant chapel,) already completed, furnishing ample and inviting accommodations for 130 scholars; with a respectable apparatus for the chemical and philosophical departments; with libraries containing more than 4000 volumes; with about twenty acres of cultivated and highly productive land, attached to the steward's establishment, in which 150 boarders might be conveniently accommodated; with 90 scholars on their catalogue, 34 of whom had been received during the current year; with $4,000 already obtained for the endowment of a theological professorship, and with a fair prospect of procuring the whole sum necessary for the endowment within a moderate period; and in the midst of an able, increasing, and public-spirited people, becoming more and more convinced of the value of education;—I ask, how could the guardians of a public seminary of learning, in such circumstances, conceive of *such* an experiment, with *no* object in view but the *public* good? Could wise and public-spirited men attempt it, after seeing College after College rise in our country to high respectability and usefulness, whose Trustees had had *nothing* to rely upon but their own enterprise and exertions, and the patronage and liberality of individuals? But it was said—*The public feel little or no interest in Hamilton College, and will do nothing for it.* This remark I know, from my own observation and experience, to be a gross calumny on the inhabitants of this region. Multitudes feel a deep and lively interest in the College, and would contribute *liberally* for its support, if they saw encouragement to do it. That the public *generally* do not manifest the *same* degree of interest in it which is manifested in Colleges of other sections of our country, is not to be denied.—How is this difference to be accounted for? Would you trust a man with your money for a public use, who, by his *own* acknowledgment, is not fit to be trusted? Is it known that any of these Colleges, after being richly endowed, have ever been impoverished by the mismanagement of their guardians? Have some of the most influential of their Boards of Trust been throwing out their insinuations against them for years, saying, 'that they should be glad to be relieved of their burden (as Trustees;) that they were no benefit to the region around them; that other portions of the country might have them, and welcome, if they would pay for the buildings; that they must go down unless something was done?' Have they been proclaiming in the streets, 'that they were injured by the beneficiaries of Education Societies; that their government was under sectarian influence?' and have they secretly countenanced their scholars in conspiracy against their instructers?

See, *particularly*, notes 7, 8, 17, 45, and 50, in connexion with the text.

[34] Let it be remembered, that I do not use the term *reformers*, by way of reproach; but merely for the purpose of discrimination. For the same purpose, I apply the phrase *friends of the College*, to those who were for sustaining the faculty and Institution, without a material change. I would by no means insinuate that those who were opposed to them were enemies of the Institution.

the ensuing day and evening, and the Board was called together on the following day, for a season, after the public exercises were over, yet the President of the College *was not invited to resume his seat.*

The object of this *free conversation* could not be misapprehended. It was the trial of the faculty, in order to prepare the way for the adoption of the report. Each member of the Board was called upon, unless I am grossly misinformed, to state *expressly* and *particularly* what was the reputation of the College, and what the standing of the President and of the other officers in the estimation of the public, so far as he possessed the means of judging. After this inquiry the reformers were prepared to take up the report in earnest. It was strenously argued by them, *that public opinion is omnipotent—that it cannot be resisted*—that nothing short of the removal of the faculty could save the Institution from desolation. The report, after all, was not adopted; and it is believed, that on account of the strength of the opposition to it, the votes of the members were not called for on the question. [35]

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[35] There are few men it is imagined, that have been long in public life, especially public teachers of youth—many of whom are the subjects of groundless prejudices towards their instructers, are restless under the most reasonable restraints, and liable to complain of the most salutary discipline—who could endure, without harm, an *ordeal* like this. Take any individual who had been thus occupied nearly twenty years—then collect sixteen men, most of them resident in the principal villages and towns of a county which, for the four months immediately preceding, had been filled with rumors touching the case in hand, and many of those men, no doubt, not *willing* merely, but *desirous* that those rumors should be thought true—let each of them be called upon to state all he had heard against this individual; and would it be surprising, should reports, opinions, suggestions, and surmises be related, which were unfavorable to him? What man, who has been for any considerable time before the public, in almost any occupation, could not be seriously injured in this way—especially if tried without being heard in his own defence; as was the fact in the present instance?

May it not be asked, and with emphasis too, whether such a procedure is not too dark and inquisitorial for the purposes of *exact* justice? Whether it comports with what ought to be the conduct of a grave and dignified body of Christian men, entrusted with the high interests of a public seminary of learning?

My trials are greatly alleviated by the assurance that many of the gentlemen present had too sacred a regard to justice, to be willing that the reputation of their President should be surrendered a victim to the cry of vague and popular rumor. Dr. Kendrick, in particular, I have been informed, entered minutely into the history of my public life, and defended my character with great plainness and boldness. The Dr. remarked that 'he had long been personally acquainted with the President; that he knew well his standing in the estimation of the people of New England, and of other parts of the country; and if public opinion is now against him,' said the Dr., 'and is omnipotent, it is not immutable.' The Dr. declared, on this and on a subsequent occasion also, that 'he had heard nothing of my being unpopular till he came into the board; and that his information was first received from some of the members themselves.'

While I was at Middlebury College, Vt., Dr. K. was a resident in the village of Middlebury, with the exception of a few months. But a short time before I came to this place, he removed to the county of Madison, where he has lived, eighteen or twenty miles from the College, until the present mo-

Some other expedient now became necessary. It might be taken for granted, provided the President could be induced to resign his office, that the professors would follow the example. But should they not, there was no *constitutional* obstacle to their removal. The Charter says, "The President shall hold his office for and during his good behaviour; the rest of the faculty during the pleasure of the Board."

On the last evening of the session, a committee of the Trustees presented me the following resolution, viz:

"*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this Board, the principal reason why Hamilton College is not more flourishing, is, that the public do not take more interest in *some* of its officers."

A measure, this, admirably adapted *ad captandum*. It might be easily foreseen that most of the Board could readily unite in the resolution—some in regard to one officer, and some to another. I should presume, indeed, that every member might vote for it. For provided the Corporation of any College pursue a course tending, in the view of the public, to prevent its growth and usefulness, is it to be expected that the public will take much interest in its officers, *as officers?*

I inquired of the committee whether they wished to see the professors and myself together? They answered, *We can call on the professors afterwards.* I remarked to them, As we all profess to be Christians, I wish we may converse freely as becomes Christians. I requested them to state what were the objections against the faculty, so far as I was concerned. Mr. Smith, who appeared to be their chairman, replied—*It does not appear that you can be said to be unpopular; but, somehow or other, you don't seem to be known. Had you preached more abroad, it would probably have been better for the College.* [36] But I was not called here,

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ment. He has been the senior professor in the Baptist Theological Seminary at Hamilton, from its organization—about ten years; and also a Trustee of the Academy in that village, at which more young men, for the last six years, have been prepared for Hamilton College, than at any other in the western district. Since his residence in this vicinity, the Dr. has almost uniformly spent his winter vacations of ten weeks, and his shorter vacations in the summer, in visiting the various parts of this and of the New England states, in soliciting benefactions for the Seminary. It is evident that no other member of the Board had travelled so much in the northern states, for several years, and had possessed the means in a higher degree, of knowing the reputation of the College and of its officers.

[36] Mr. Smith, who lives only twenty miles from the College, and was graduated at this Institution since I have been at the head of it, remarked to me in May, 1827, three months previous to this meeting, 'that he had never learned from the students, nor from any other source, that they were not satisfied with my instruction, till he learned it from the professor's letter of the 23d April immediatcly preceding.' To the suggestion, made to him during this interview in May, that I thought it probable I should wish to retire from my office before many years, he replied—'I hope you will hold on these ten years.' He came to the meeting in August without, I presume, any idea of my leaving the College, and without any anticipation of the measures which were introduced. Yet, after the *free conversation*, he found the public sentiment so much against me—of which, it seems, he had heard nothing three months before, favorable as his situation had been for learning the truth—that

gentlemen, said I, for the purpose of preaching. The Corporation knew, some of them at least, when I was invited to your College, that owing to the state of my health, preaching was seldom in my power. And will they complain of me for not performing a service, which, by contract, I am under no obligation to perform, and, for want of health, have been unable to perform? [37]

I have preached, however, more frequently in this vicinity than I did in the vicinity of Middlebury College while there. If my services have been less useful to Hamilton College than they were to that Institution, the fact is not to be attributed to my inability to preach, but to a widely different cause; to a cause entirely beyond my control. *There*, the faculty were permitted to manage the internal affairs of the College according to their *own* discretion. Not a single measure of the faculty, for the period of

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he deemed it impossible the College should succeed under my auspices. No one on the floor, however strange it may seem, contended more strenuously, it is said, for the *omnipotency* of public opinion.

But some of the Board have assured me that, after all, nothing of a serious character appeared against me, during the *free conversation*. The burden of the complaint was, as I was informed by Dr. Brown and others, that I was *not known*, viz. so much as I should have been, (the Doctor remarked,) had I preached in every town and village in the western country. And he added—'Some of the Board have a high opinion of preaching, as a means of building up a College.'

Does it not appear somewhat parodoxical, that while the popular sentiment was so strong against me that, in the opinion of Mr. S. the interests of the College required I should be sacrificed to it, at all hazards, yet I *could not be said to be unpopular, and, somehow or other, did not seem to be known?* And is it less paradoxical, that I should have been sufficiently known in this country, although a stranger here, to induce the Board, without the agency of personal friends here or abroad, to invite me to the presidency of their College, and yet, *somehow or other, should not seem to be known*, after having been at the head of it ten years? The gentleman then President of the Board, once said to me—'When you was proposed as a candidate for the Presidency, it was remarked before the Board (or their committee,)—*This man has no recommendations.*'

During this session a resolution was brought forward to sweep away all the faculty at a single stroke. It was thought the easiest way of getting rid of those they wished to remove. If all were cut off, no one, it was said, could complain; and the Board could re-elect those whom it was desirable to retain. Similar, without doubt, were the designs of the committee. They intended to effect, by their report, the resignation of *all* the faculty, and then re-elect a part of them.

Honest reader, what dost thou think of such measures?

[37] Extract of a letter from a committee of the Corporation, announcing my election to the Presidency of the College, dated

UTICA, 22d Jan. 1817.

"It is not unknown to you, that at present we have no professor of Divinity. Our late President, for some time previous to his death, was in the habit, of performing divine service every Sunday morning in the chapel. This had not been required of him as *a duty*: he had, however, adopted it on much reflection. Our Board are impressed with the importance of this regulation; and, although they do by no means consider it an indispensable condition, yet they think a service of this sort would be very desirable.

(Signed) JOSEPH KIRKLAND,
HENRY DWIGHT,
MORRIS S. MILLER."

eight years, was ever called up before the Board, or ever alluded to as improper. Not an individual of that body, to my knowledge, ever complained of the faculty abroad, or of any their measures. But how has it been *here?*

I then asked the committee—Do the Board say that I am superannuated, as has been reported? The answer was—*No; no such thing has been said.* Do they say that I have been less vigilant and faithful in the discharge of my official duties the last year than I have previously been? They replied—*Nothing of the kind has been suggested.* I remarked, one of the two conclusions, then, is irresistible, viz. that the reports in circulation respecting my superannuation and inability are sheer fabrications, invented for some sinister purpose; or that the public, in some way or other, have been deceived as to my qualifications, notwithstanding I have grown gray within the walls of Colleges, and have passed through every grade of academic office. Of these conclusions, you may make your own election.

The meeting was adjourned till the 3d Wednesday in September. [38]

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[38] I have made no boast of my talents as an instructer. I never inquired, previous to the persecution I have lately experienced, for the purpose of learning my estimation in the view of my pupils. It has been my unvarying practice to endeavor to perform, as far as able, what appeared to be my duty, and, without solicitude, to leave the issue with God. It is probable that many of my pupils have been dissatisfied with my instructions. It would be a novel case if they have not. But not an instance, however, of dissatisfaction on this account had ever come to my knowledge, antecedent to our commencement, August, 1826. From the offices of instruction to which I had been called, in several respectable Colleges, I had been encouraged to hope that reasonable young men, at least, would have no very substantial grounds for dissatisfaction.

In 1796, I was graduated at Yale College, and at the same time appointed tutor at Williams.

1798, I was called to the same office at Yale, which I occupied five years.

1801, I was elected to the professorship of Divinity in Yale; but my health having failed me before I considered myself prepared to enter upon its duties, I finally declined it.

1806, I was invited to the professorship of the Greek language in Union.

1809, I was called from Union to the Presidency of Middlebury.

1814, I was re-invited to the professorship of the Greek language in Union; which invitation I declined.

1817, I was invited, in January, as already stated, to the Presidency of Hamilton, as successor of Dr. Backus; and in February ensuing, to that of Yale, as successor of Dr. Dwight.

In July of the same year, I was re-invited to Hamilton.

The following communication from the last class which I have had the honor, and have been permitted to instruct, I shall be excused for inserting, notwithstanding it has appeared in several publications.

"To Dr. Davis, *President of Hamilton College:*

Sir—The Senior Class of Hamilton College cannot persuade themselves to resign the situation which they have hitherto occupied under your guardianship, without expressing their grateful sense of the manner in which the duties of your office have been fulfilled.

We have formerly had occasion to exhibit such a testimony as members of a College: circumstances, as we believe, now render a repetition of the same sentiments incumbent upon us as members of a class.

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE BOARD—*Sept. 19th*, 1827.

Present—Seventeen members, viz.—Messrs. Kirkland, Norton, McNiel, Lothrop, Brown, Dwight, Eells, Williams, Maynard, Bronson, Coe, Smith, Gridley, Hopkins, Frost, Aikin, Davis.

Immediately after the members were called to order, the President, Gen. Kirkland, remarked to me before the Board that *as some subjects of a personal nature, which it would not be pleasant for me to hear, were to be brought before them, he should think it proper for me to retire.*

I replied to him, I claim the privilege of expressing my sentiments, previously, on some of your proceedings at the last meeting, and I have a right to claim it.

The following are virtually, and in a high degree verbally, my remarks on the occasion:

The report, Sir, presented by your committee, at the late meeting, furnishes *prima facie* evidence that the object of the framers of it was to induce your faculty to resign. I attribute no such motive to the members of the Board generally. The member who moved for the committee had, I am confident, no such object in view; and were he still a member, and present with us, he would frown with indignation upon such a procedure. [39]

Disturbed by difficulties, as a part of our College life has been—for the circumstances which must still endear it to our future recollection, and for the advantages which have, notwithstanding, been presented for our improvement, we feel in a great measure indebted to the dignified and impartial manner in which the functions of your responsible station have been performed.

Discharging the duties of an office in its nature, at any time, not a little arduous, and from existing circumstances—from whatever source arising—at the present time peculiarly trying, we bear a willing testimony to the prompt exertions, the indefatigable energy, with which you have encountered every difficulty.

Not to have entertained a grateful remembrance of the uniform affability and parental kindness which have characterized your deportment towards us, would have proved us unworthy of them. Such has been our uniform feeling; such, so near the moment of our regretted, but final separation, is our sincere expression.

Passing, as we are, into an opening world, we are happy in the opportunity to present to you this just tribute of warm affection, with our sincere wishes that happiness and prosperity may crown the remainder of your days.

T. B. HURLBERT,
DANIEL D. WHEDON,
JOHN J. ULLMAN.

Hamilton College, August 26th, 1828." *Committee of the Class.*

[39] The President and Secretary of the Board were members of the committee, and had almost the entire agency in planning and drafting the report. The former of these gentlemen will not deny (nor would the latter, were he still with us) that they saw Mr. Ford a few weeks previous to the meeting in May, at which he moved for the appointment of the committee, and expressed to him their views of the conduct and character of the professor, and of the propriety and necessity, it is believed, of removing him from his office. And I speak advisedly when I say, not a word was spoken by them to Mr. Ford respecting the removal of the President, or any other officer; nor any

I know full well, Sir, the heads that contrived and the hands that brought that thing forward. Had they entertained a desire

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dissatisfaction manifested towards the faculty *generally*. Mr. Lothrop has acknowledged to me, that Mr. Ford's *sole motive*, in his motion for the committee, was the removal of this officer; and Mr. Kirkland remarked, as I am assured, some months before the meeting of the Board in May, (1827), "*that he thought the Corporation ought to take the professor in hand.*" Now after all this (and after the appearance of the letter, too, which was not written till after their interview with Mr. Ford, and of which the committee will not plead ignorance), how could they say to the Board, in their report, that they had "been able to find nothing improper in the conduct of the professor of a specific character?" That the knowledge of facts pertaining to his conduct, which they deemed reprehensible, was *then* in their possession—or that reports of such facts had reached them, surely they will not deny. And granting they had doubts as to the truth of them, it is firmly believed they made no inquiries to remove those doubts—or if they inquired at all, that they were careful to inquire of those whom they supposed could not, or would not give them information. And why did Gen. Kirkland, when I offered, about three weeks before their report was made to the Board, to show him a copy of the professor's letter, reply to me, 'If the committee wish it, they can call for it?' And why was it that the committee did not call for it? And how could 'one of the committee' (Gen. Kirkland, I believe) remark to Dr. Norton, a few weeks prior to July, 1829, as the Dr. informed me about the first of that month, 'that he now regretted the committee did not recommend to the Board to remove the professor?' And yet they had found in his conduct nothing *improper*, as they stated in their report, of a *specific character!!*

To reconcile a procedure like this with the views and principles which must ever govern the conduct of fair and honorable men, is a work for others to perform. But the committee acted not without motives. The principal and most active members of it—many do not doubt—had an object of their *own* in view; and it is believed confidently—

1. That the professor was not regarded by them as the only obstacle to the attainment of their object.

2. That they apprehended certain clergymen of the Board would resist the removal of the professor *alone* to the last extremity, but would readily assent to any measure which would be likely to issue in the resignation or removal of the President.

3. That they were fully sensible there existed, in the Board, strong prejudices against the President, on account of the particular Christian communion of which he is a member, and because he had ever been an active friend and patron of the Western Education Society.

4. That they were equally sensible there was also in the Board an avowed spirit of hostility to *all Colleges;* and, consequently, an opposition to the faculty, as friends and advocates of Colleges.

5. That they presumed there were some members of the Corporation of perfectly upright intentions, who could be easily made to yield to *their* guidance.

6. That they had strong expectations that the alarming reports then in circulation, respecting the prospects of the College and some of its officers, (aided by the influence of the preceding considerations), would induce the Board quietly to acquiesce in any measure which might probably eventuate in the voluntary resignation of the faculty.

7. That they were sanguine in their hopes that the report would be followed immediately by the resignation of the faculty; and, this object being obtained without excitement of feelings and conflicting sentiments in the Board, that then they would be easily persuaded to model the Institution anew, in such a manner as would enable them [these members of the committee] to compass their purpose. (See note 64.)

8. That they were encouraged to expect the Board itself, in this way,

to retain the faculty, would the fees of tuition, and nothing else, have been offered us in their report? Would the President of the Board, in company with the Chairman of the committee, have said, in their conference with me, *our money is all gone—the fees of tuition are all you can have—you can't have a cent more—if you can collect it, well—if not, you must be the losers*? [40]

And whence the distinction between your present and future faculty, if you had no desire for our removal? *We* could have nothing but the fees of tuition, whether we could collect it or not; but *they* were to rely for support, *as far as practicable*, on the number of scholars. *They*, it seems, might have something *more* than the fees of tuition. [41] It was stated in your report, that all your contingent expenses might be defrayed by the revenue of your permanent fund. To what purposes, then, was your room-rent, &c. to be applied? Granting there were 100 scholars, the charges, as they customarily have been made to them for sweeping,

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would be relieved from the embarrassment which was experienced by reason of the exhausted state of their treasury, saved from public reprehension, and that the inquiry would cease to be made, What has become of the $150,000 which the Corporation of Hamilton College has received, and for which they have nothing to show, according to their own statement, but their establishment and a fund of $15,000?

These anticipations were fully realized, so far as practicable, without the resignation of the faculty. What is believed to have been a primary object of certain individuals of the committee, and perhaps a few other members of the Board, was not immediately perceived by the Board generally, nor, as is believed, by *all* the committee. But soon, no doubt could remain that their object was, First, to effect the resignation of the faculty; and, that end attained, Secondly, to farm out the Institution to some enterprising young men, on such terms, and under such a modification, as would render it a source of gain to them, and free the Corporation from their embarrassments and apprehensions. Otherwise, when asked, Who will you get for your faculty, if your present officers leave you? why did Gen. Kirkland, Mr. Dwight, and others answer again and again, 'We can find men enough who will be willing to *take* the College?' Why was it repeatedly said by them, 'There will be no difficulty as to scholars; we might soon have three hundred here?' Why was the Round Hill school at Northampton adduced in proof of what could be done? Why was it remarked that the instructers of that school had been at great expense for buildings, but were, notwithstanding, dividing very handsome profits? And why was a certain clergyman of New-England written to—as he himself declares—and asked whether he would *take* the College on his *own* responsibility?

[40] Would a *gentleman*, if he wished to retain us, have addressed me in language so repulsive? Yet the General remarked to me in May, 1828, 'You misapprehended my views—I never thought, till the meeting of the Board in January (the same year), it was best that you should leave the College; my plan was, to retain you and professor S., and get rid of all the rest of the faculty.' But why get rid of the professor of the Greek language? [See note 39.]

[41] Here the President of the Board attempted to acquit himself and his associates of partiality. He labored to show that the proffer to the *present*, was the same as the offer recommended to be made to the *future* faculty. That *practically*, there was no difference. That is, as he contended, since relying on the fees of tuition for support, and relying on the number of scholars, *are not the same thing*, there was no injustice manifested in the report towards the present faculty. But, of necessity, the General failed of his object. For it is perfectly obvious that they are precisely the same thing, when the rate of tuition is fixed; notwithstanding they are expressed in different words.

ringing the bell, and ordinary repairs, would amount to $300; room rent to $900; diplomas to $125; commencement dinner to $50—the annual income then from all these sources would be $1375.

The President of the Board said, in reply, 'Our late treasurer spent in extra repairs, one year, $1400; and this income should be reserved for such purposes.' It is acknowledged, I remarked, this sum was spent during a certain year, in altering and making anew the roof, and plastering the interior of Hamilton Hall, and in repairs of the steward's establishment. But this expense has occurred but once since the foundation of the College—a period of fifteen years, and will not, it is hoped, occur again during the next succeeding equal period.

With 100 scholars, then, you would make an annual appropriation to meet an expense, which would not probably occur more than once in fifteen years.

A part of this income, the Gen. then remarked, he supposed could be applied to make up deficiencies that might occasionally happen in the fees of tuition.

I replied, if any such thing was intended, why was it not expressed in their report by the committee, as a ground of encouragement to your faculty? And why assured by you in such strong and unequivocal language, that *not a cent* was to be expected by us, beyond the fees of tuition, whether we could collect it or not?

I then called for the resolution introduced and passed at the last session, viz.—"That in the opinion of the Board, the principal reason why Hamilton College is not more flourishing is, that the public do not take more interest in some of its officers." But the resolution was not to be found. *Dr. Lansing*, it was remarked, who introduced it, and was not now present, *had probably taken it away with him.* I inquired of the committee whether I had stated it correctly? It was answered that I had.

I have learned, Mr. President, since this resolution was brought to me, that it was shown to no one of your officers besides. I take it for granted, therefore, that your President was the principal object of it. The design of it could not be misunderstood.—If it was not intended to effect the resignation of your faculty, what possible object could be designed to be answered by it? But your President being found not disposed to *yield*, I presume it was deemed useless to present it *afterward*, to use the language of the committee to your professors. [42]

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[42] Professor Strong was told by Mr. Smith, that if he would resign with the rest of the faculty, the Board would undoubtedly re-elect him. But this gentleman treated the proposition as every honorable man could not but treat it. Professor Monteith actually proposed to some of the faculty that they should all resign their offices. He had been assured by Mr. Coe, as I was informed, that there was no difficulty with any one but the President; or that the corporation had no objection to any other member of the faculty: and he had probably been led to expect, by some of his clerical friends, that if he would have the magnanimity to assist them, in this way, to get the President out of office, that his own office would be restored to him—as hopeless as his case would have been.

Why this vague and indefinite language in your resolution? If, in the opinion of this Board, *some* of your officers are obstacles to the prosperity of your College, why not tell us who those officers are? Why do you not go to them, and tell them that they, and *they only*, are the objects of your complaint; and state to them explicitly the grounds of your dissatisfaction,—instead of pursuing this crooked, this dark, this underhanded policy? Do measures like these comport with the dignity of this honorable Board? Permit me to ask, is it kind, is it just, is it magnanimous, is it wise, to endeavor to worry down your faculty by your resolutions, your reports, and your committees? [43]

Supposing your object attained, what would be the consequence of such measures to your College? Would you not establish a precedent which would be fatal to its prospects? For where is the man who, in such circumstances, would trust himself in your hands? Where is the man fit to be President of your College, who would subject himself to the cruel necessity of having his reputation blasted, and the support of his family wrested from him, as soon as a report should be circulated that he is unpopular; that he is a heretic; or that he is *intemperate*,—as has already been asked of me? For this public opinion, it seems, must be yielded to, *however* created. It has been asserted on this floor, that it is *omnipotent*—that it cannot be resisted. Who, that should be desirous for the removal of an officer, with a view of providing a place for himself, or a friend, or from some other sinister motive, could not, by false rumors and intrigue, create such a necessity? Let the principle be once established, and where will you find the man, however innocent and meritorious, who might not, by *such* means, be sacrificed at the shrine of your mighty Moloch?

You attribute, Sir, more than is just to your faculty. It is owing, in my opinion, principally to the maladministration of the Trustees, that the College is not more flourishing. Its concerns have been controlled by the *strong* men of the Board, as they have been called. [44] Measures deeply affecting the vital inter-

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[43] After I had closed my remarks, the Secretary whispered to me, 'We did not mean you in the resolution; we meant Monteith.' I replied, Why did you not say so, then—and why did you send it to me?

[44] Here Mr. Dwight courteously interrupted me. 'We have come together,' said he, 'to consult for the good of the Institution, and to endeavor to promote its interests; and I see no benefit to be derived from this proceeding.' I replied to the chair, 'I have a right, Sir, to vindicate my character; I demand that right; and are this Board prepared to deprive me of it?' I was permitted to proceed.

I now remarked to the Board, by way of explanation, that they would doubtless recollect a gentleman (whom I named), President of an eastern College, (than whom, perhaps, a more profound and accurate observer of men is not to be found), was at our commencement in 1822; that he said to me, 'You have a noble Board here; they are a very intelligent set of men; but your danger is in your strength;' and that I replied to him, 'I have long been sensible of that, Sir.' The same gentleman remarked to me in Feb. 1828, 'I have trembled for you ever since I was at your commencement: I knew that your Corporation would never suffer their faculty to manage the College.' And he has subsequently remarked, 'Nothing on earth would

ests of the Institution have, through their influence, been carried with great *apparent* unanimity, when a large proportion of the members were, in *judgment*, opposed to them, and when it was known that the faculty totally disapproved of them. (Several of their measures were here enumerated, some of which have already been mentioned in this narrative.) But not only the measures which have been adopted on this floor have been injurious to the College: the surmises and complaints against the faculty and Institution, that have been made by some of the members elsewhere, have not, as I believe, been less injurious. [45]

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induce me to take charge of a College with such a Board of Trustees as you have.'

[45] Immediately after, the President of the Board, during a short recess, remarked to me, in the presence of several of the members, 'I think you ought to specify: I presume you meant Mr. Hart for one.' I replied, 'I did mean Mr. Hart.' He added, 'I did not know but you meant me also.' I answered, 'I did mean you also.' (But why did the Gen. suspect that I meant him?) He wished to know what *he* had said against the College? I answered him, 'after saying in my house last winter (January or February, 1827), in the presence of a number of persons, that our treasury was exhausted, our money gone, that our College must go down; that you had written to your son in Europe, that he must not think of coming here when he should have returned, as we had already more officers than we could support: you further remarked, that you said to Mr. Whiting the other day, in Albany, they might have our College, professors and all, and welcome, if they would only pay us for the buildings.' The General replied to me, 'I was only in jest; and I am surprised that any man of common sense should suppose I was in earnest.'*

The General wished to know what else he had said. I answered that our

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* Mr. Kirkland, son of the President of the Board, was several years tutor in the College. In 1824 he was elected professor of the Latin language, with an understanding that he should enter upon the duties of the office in two years from that time—or sooner, provided the number of scholars increased to one hundred and twenty. He remained in his tutorship one year subsequent to his election as professor. In the autumn of 1827, he returned from Europe, after two years absence. He had never entered upon the labors of his professorship—no salary had ever been voted him; his father insisted on his relying upon his own resources for support, during his absence, that he might be at liberty, on his return, as he remarked to me, to take himself to the best market: but it was decided by the Board, subsequently to his return, that Mr. K. was actually a professor in the College; and when it was thought expedient by the Board to dispense with the services of the Greek or Latin professor, for a season, their claims, in these circumstances, were adjudged to be precisely the same, notwithstanding the Greek professor had been in office more than six years.

Mr. Whiting is a highly respectable inhabitant of Geneva, and one of the most efficient Trustees of the College there. Could Mr. W., or even myself, as the General seemed to think, be so void of common sense as to believe him in earnest in his offer to Mr. W.? I have never supposed that the General could presume, whatever might be his opinion of his influence in the Board, that he actually had a right to *sell* the College, *officers and all*. But could Mr. W. think the General in *earnest*, as a Trustee, to build up the College? Could a friend of the College be expected to talk so? and especially, could a Trustee, if a wise man, talk so, who had any regard to its prosperity? A person who was present and heard the General's observation, and the offer which he said he made to Mr. W., remarked, 'that conversing in such a manner was the direct way for Trustees to pull down a College.' The General replied, 'Such is our situation, and the facts are not to be concealed.' Yet, forsooth, he was *only in jest*.

I remarked, subsequently, that I was still willing, as I had ever been, to do all in my power for the College—that we greatly needed

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former treasurer had told me he had repeatedly heard him talk against the College; and he was not the only gentleman in Utica from whom I had received such information.

The General, to my certain knowledge, has long since remarked, 'that the College was of little consequence to the county—that he had spent his time and money in its service—that he would give $100 to be freed from his burden (i. e. as Trustee)—that, for his part, he was very willing the people of the west should have it, if they wanted it.' He has complained of the President, that 'he is not known; he is not enough before the public—he ought, in vacations, to be preaching in all our principal villages—he ought to do more in the College.'

As to my preaching, it is true that I have preached in a great proportion of the principal villages in the western region of this state; and in regard to my labors in the College, I have usually heard the same number of recitations as the professors, viz. two in a day; besides correcting and criticising, daily, two compositions of the Senior class, and correcting their own written declamations for the chapel—an exercise not in use here, till after my arrival. I cannot learn from their by-laws, that the Board ever required of my predecessor, or that he ever attended more than six classical exercises weekly; and as to the labor of correcting and criticising the compositions, he was, as has already been seen, *kindly* relieved of it by their own resolution. [See note 16.] During the whole of his administration, there were two, and most of the time three professors, and one or more tutors to assist in the government; all of whom studied and lodged in the same buildings with the scholars. Since I have been here, there have been ordinarily nearly twice the number of young men to govern, yet but a very small portion of the time has there been, either day or night, within the walls of the College, any officer to aid in the government, excepting two tutors. My predecessor was in the habit of preaching once on the Sabbath in the College; but this was a voluntary service, not *required* or expected of him, it is believed, by the Board, as a *duty*. He had long been the pastor of a church. He was favored with a vigorous constitution, and with uniformly excellent health. His sermons were all prepared at his hand; and such a service, no doubt, he regarded, as would every godly minister in his circumstances, not as a *labor*, but as a privilege and a delight.

The substance of the following communication, dated January, 1828, was made known to me nearly twelve months before. "Some time previous (I believe about six months) to the introduction of the measures in 1827, to effect a revolution in Hamilton College, I distinctly recollect to have heard Mr. J . . . . . D . . . (of Utica) remark, that he had frequently been pained to hear General Kirkland speak of the College in the manner he had done, before all sorts of people. D. P."

In the winter or spring of 1824, if I mistake not, an article appeared in a Buffalo Gazette, informing the public that the Corporation of Hamilton College had spent $10,000 of their funds, in educating a class of young men under the care of a *certain company* or *association*, called, the writer believed, the Western Education Society: that owing to their embarrassment, on this account, the Corporation had been obliged to petition the Legislature for relief; and as it was probable they would renew their petition, it was important the public should know the facts. Mr. Frost, who visited Buffalo not long after, replied, or caused a reply to be inserted in the same paper, that the writer was misinformed as to the facts; that it was true, about $10,000 was due to the Corporation, for tuition and board, from young men educated here, but that a part of it only was due from the class of youth alluded to. To this the writer rejoined, that he *could not* be under a mistake, as he had received his information from a member of the *faculty*. Mr. F., after his return from Buffalo, informed me that this communication, as he there learned,

the services of an able professor of Divinity,—that it had for some time been my intention, whenever the Board would appoint such an officer, to say to them, if the means for his support should not have been already obtained, that in lieu of the $400 which I had sub-

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was in consequence of complaints made against the College in that village, a short time previous, by Mr. Hart, of Utica; and that the writer was deceived as to the character of his informant, by confounding Mr. Hart, who was a member of the Corporation, with the faculty.

On the conduct of this member it is unnecessary to dwell. His habit of talking against the Institution is notorious, as the people of Utica can testify. I have heard him declare in the streets of that village, 'that the College was under sectarian influence—that he had no faith in it—that the charity scholars were ruining it—that he should resign his seat.'

Now it was ascertained, by recurring to the treasurer's books, that the beneficiaries of the Western and other Education Societies owed the Board much less than half the amount specified; that they had actually paid into the treasury for tuition cash to the amount of nearly $3000; while the Corporation had been at no expense for their board, and had not paid a single cent more for the support of instructers than would have been paid had those young men had no connexion with the College.

The substance of the following was communicated to me long since in conversation. "In December (as the writer believes), 1824 or '25, during the session of the Oneida Common Pleas at Rome, the Honorable ——, then a Trustee of Hamilton Collegc, inquired of me what the difficulty was at the College? and on my replying that as he was a Trustee, he ought to know, he remarked to me, that he feared the President had not sufficient energy: and after some little conversation about change of the officers of the College, asked me if I was acquainted with his *** ** ***, Mr. ——? and on my saying that I was, he remarked that Mr. —— was getting along well—that he managed the affairs of his church and society with a *good deal* of energy. And Mr. ——, the Trustee, spoke of introducing new members into the Board, as I then understood, and still believe, from *personal* views.

"November 28th, 1829. S. D."

But as high an opinion as the gentleman above alluded to seems to have entertained of energy, he was the member of the committee who, in December, 1823, strenuously opposed the proposition to require of the young gentlemen, who had bound themselves by a written covenant not to take the oath before a civil magistrate, to sign a confession in the presence of the faculty. He was *afraid* they would think it *severe.* [See page 22.] And it is proved beyond controversy, that this same member of the Corporation, about three years previous, threw out hints and complaints against the President of Hamilton College, in the presence of several persons, *as being too fond of exercising authority*—as having *too much energy.* It has been ascertained that his observations were made to S. D., shortly after the explosion of the cannon. [See page 24.] Alas for any College, when such is the conduct of some of its principal guardians, and when their motives are *personal!*

The following was put into my hands August, 1828. "In conversation with Mr. Bronson, of Utica (himself at the time, be it remembered, a member of the Board), respecting the President and Trustees of Hamilton College, Mr. B. observed that it was no matter how well the President was qualified: he could not get along—no man could succeed as President while there were such, or some persons, meaning, as I understood from previous remarks, some of the Trustees, going up and down the streets, repeatedly affirming that the President was not a proper man for his office. The above is the impression made on my mind at the time, which was about the first of May, 1828, although the words may not have been the same, nor precisely in the same order. N. J."

Many other facts of a similar character might be enumerated, were it necessary. And as to those which are above stated, or mentioned in other parts

scribed for a permanent fund, I would give $300 annually towards his support, so long as I was President of their College. This offer, said I, I now make, provided you will elect such a man. I will do more than this. I will give up, for his use, your house which I now occupy. [46]

As we were called to dinner, I said to the President of the Board, I will now retire; and when you have finished your business of a *personal* nature, please to let me know it, and I will return.

The session was continued till sunset of the next day. And, strange as the fact may appear, I was not requested by him to take my seat with them till within fifteen minutes of their adjournment—and then, at the instance of another member, as I was informed. [47]

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of the narrative [see, in particular, notes 7, 8, 32, 63, especially 70], my knowledge is purely incidental. 'True, in some instances, I have inquired to ascertain the truth of rumors which had casually reached me.

[46] I informed the Board on this occasion, that since commencement I had visited New-York, and that, at the suggestion of one or two benevolent individuals in that city, a number of gentlemen assembled (I believe fourteen) for the purpose of deliberating on the expediency of making an effort there, at some future time, in favor of the College. After learning from me its circumstances and prospects in general, and my views, in particular, of the importance of a professorship of Divinity to the Institution, and what had already been done at the west towards its endowment; they resolved unanimously, that they regarded such an establishment as highly important to the interests of the College: and provided the amount sufficient for its endowment should not be procured in the interior of the State, they would cheerfully encourage an effort in that city, to raise the sum which might still be wanting. I further remarked to the Board, that some of the gentlemen expressed to me privately a readiness to give liberally to the object, and doubted not but something handsome might be obtained.

Such information, it might naturally be expected, would be not a little encouraging to the friends of the Institution, and to its guardians especially. But this consideration, with the offer made by the President, had no influence with the majority. The work of *reform* was begun, and it appears they were determined it should be accomplished. A resolution was introduced by Mr. Williams, during my absence, to appoint a professor of Divinity. It was strenuously opposed by the reformers. Mr. Dwight remarked, as Dr. Norton informed me, 'that such a measure would be no better than *patchwork*; that such a man *would only be in their way*.' Strange that a good man should be striving to accomplish an object in a public seminary of learning, to which such an officer could be in the way!

It was also remarked by this reverend gentleman, on the samo or another occasion, as the Doctor further informed me, 'that he wished to see every thing swept from the hill but just the buildings'—or what was in substance tantamount to it.

[47] This is the second time, be it remembered, that I was advised to leave the Board, because things of a *personal* nature were to be brought into view. And the General at a subsequent meeting again thought it best for me to retire, and for the same reason: but his wishes were not complied with. Is it not remarkable, that discussion of a personal nature,—as the President *merely* was concerned,—should occupy so much of the sessions of the Board? Is it

It appeared that the Board had been discussing a question of primary interest to both the faculty and the College, on which some of the members, at least,—if the President of the Board did not,—wished my opinion: for immediately after I had resumed my seat, he inquired of me whether I thought all the scholars, with the exception of the Senior class, could be taught by three professors without the aid of tutors. My answer was, I think they might be, though the labours of the professors would be arduous. But such an arrangement, I am confident, in the judgment of every man experienced in the interior management of a College, would be unwise. The night is the season of disorder in a College; and without officers who could remain within its walls through the night, as well as the day, I should have fearful apprehensions for the consequences. I cannot, however, predict with certainty as to the effect; for the experiment has never, to my knowledge, been made—and I presume the Corporation of no College before ever thought of making it.

Gen. Kirkland replied, *Should such an arrangement take place,* ONE *of the professors would probably be without a family for a season, and could lodge in the College.* Nothing more, I believe, was said on the subject.

The following resolutions were then introduced and carried, viz. "That the services of the professor of the Latin language be dispensed with till the next meeting of the Board." That the salary of the professor of the Greek language be reduced to $650."

The Secretary was called upon to read the minutes of their proceedings, which, with the resolutions just passed, were as follows, viz:

"*Resolved*, That the *pecuniary* circumstances of the College make it necessary to reduce the salaries of the officers."

"*Resolved*, That the salary of the President be reduced to $1,200." [48]

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not possible that subjects of deep personal interest to some other member were in contemplation, and that, on this account, a portion of the Board thought the President's absence desirable?

[48] After resolving that the state of their treasury rendered the reduction of the salaries of the *officers* necessary, why not reduce the salaries of the other officers *immediately*, as well as the President's? Why delay the reduction of the Greek professor's salary twenty-four hours? Was it thought expedient by *some* of the reformers (by whose opinion and wishes those of the others seem to have been very much governed), to ascertain previously whether the Greek or Latin professor be retained? Had the Greek professor's services been dispensed with, is it likely that a salary *less* than $800 would have been voted the Latin professor? And why was it, when the reduction of the salary of the professor of mathematics was proposed, soon after the President's was reduced, that the reformers, as I am assured, instantly startled at it? The fact is, the salary of this officer but a short time previous, in consequence of their fears of losing him, had been increased from $800 to $1000—and that, too, when the Board were fully apprized of the state of their treasury. The reduction of this gentleman's salary, therefore, for the reason stated in the resolution, would have savored too much of inconsistency. Why, then, this

"*Resolved*, That Messrs. Lothrop, Maynard, Frost, Dwight, and Smith, be a committee to report to the Board, as soon as

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sweeping resolution: "The pecuniary circumstances of the College make it necessary to reduce the salaries of the *officers?*" And why take $150 from a professor whose salary was but $800, and leave the salaries of two professors entirely untouched, when one of them, too, was $1000?

In regard to my own salary, I had previously offered, as has been seen, to give $300 of it to aid the College, and the use of my house too—estimated by the Board at $200. This offer was spontaneous; made at the advice or suggestion of no one; and at a time, when it had never been conceived, as I knew, that the Board had power to take a cent from the President's salary, without his consent.

Could such a body of men, as the Corporation of a College ought to be, after their President had made a voluntary offer of $500 annually for its service, reduce his salary, by a solemn resolution, $600, on account of the *pecuniary* circumstances of the Institution; and without even a single suggestion to him previously on the subject?

Could they deliberately pass a resolution, tending deeply to wound the feelings and reputation of *any* man, for the sake of $100? Could they do it from the hope that the President, conceiving himself insulted by it, would be induced, under the influence of high feelings of resentment and indignation, to resign his office? Is it possible that liberal and high-minded men could suffer themselves to be governed by such motives? What, then, could have been their motive? Who can but admire ingenuousness and magnanimity, in those professing to be honorable men!

The truth is, had the committee, instead of the course adopted by them, treated the faculty as gentlemen have a right, and expect to be treated by gentlemen, (in a courteous, open and undisguised manner;) had they come and informed us they had resolved on recommending to the Board a united and vigorous effort to raise the character of the College, and respectfully asked whether we could not, for the sake of encouraging them in the effort, relinquish a portion of our salaries; there was not, (I say it with confidence) a permanent member of the faculty who would not have done it, for a season at least, and with pleasure. But as it was perfectly obvious, from the report itself, as well as from the remarks of the President of the Board when the report was presented to me, that the object of the committee was to induce the faculty to resign, (whatever may have been their professions to the contrary,) and that they were reckoning on our want of firmness and moral courage, we at once resolved—although ready to aid the Institution to the utmost of our power—that, whatever we could give, we would give in our own way, and on our own conditions. Who, that has the spirit of a man in him, could crouch before such an artifice? And does the Gospel require it?

My reverend brother, Mr. Frost, proposed that the Board should take $800 from my salary. But Mr. F. has assured me, 'it was not his opinion till the January meeting—four months afterward, that it was best I should leave the College.' How is his proposition, then, to be reconciled with the character of a wise man, which Mr. F. is as ambitious to sustain as any other man? Let Mr. F. make the case his own,—suppose the Presbyterian society in Whitesboro' were to reduce his salary, or to attempt to reduce it, nearly one half, without even giving him any previous intimation on the subject; and should tell him, notwithstanding, it was not their opinion, at the time, it was best for him to leave them? Could Mr. F., while they manifested such a total disregard for his feelings, his reputation, and his usefulness, believe them? But Mr. Coe remarked (see note 70), several weeks prior to the meeting in January, that Mr. F. was in favor of trying to place Mr. B**** at the head of the College.

I remarked to Mr. Dwight, in January, that I knew not how to account for his conduct as a Christian, in deliberately voting, and (without even consulting me too) to reduce my salary $600, when I had just before voluntarily

practicable, a proper course of studies, exercises, and discipline to be pursued in the Institution, and the treasurer pay all the necessary expenses of the committee in the execution of this duty."

The meeting was then adjourned till the 9th of January. [49]

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD, *Nov.* 14*th*, 1827.

Present, ten members, viz.—Messrs. Norton, Hopkins, McNiel, Kirkland, Eells, Smith, Williams, Gridley, Coe, Davis.

Early in October, Mr. Strong, our professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, received an appointment from Rutgers College, which was promptly accepted. Mr. S. repeatedly and openly declared that he was induced to leave Hamilton College by the extraordinary proceedings of the Trustees—that they were the sole cause of his doing it—that he saw no security for himself provided he should stay.

As the Collegial year had just commenced, several of the Junior class, which was under his instruction principally, apprehending, from the late movements of the Board, as they stated, that the vacancy occasioned by his resignation would not be filled soon, left us and united with other Colleges. Many of their classmates were making arrangements to follow them. With the view of checking this evil, some members of the Board deemed it vitally important to call a special meeting of the body, in the manner prescribed by the charter, and to fill the office as soon as possible. [50]

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offered to appropriate $500 annually to the use of the College. He replied, *I did what I thought to be my duty.* That is not the point, Sir, I answered. I wish to know how you could *think* it your duty, when you could not but know it was no better than assassination, as it respected my character. How could you justify such conduct towards a brother, on the principles of that religion by which you and I profess to be governed? Mr. D. made no reply.

[49] Soon after the adjournment of the Board, Mr. Frost, a member of the committee, started as an agent for New-England, for the *sole* purpose, it *seemed*, of visiting High Schools, Round Hill Schools, Military Academies, &c., and of learning, it is presumed, in what manner the College could be best modelled anew, and *modern improvements* ingrafted upon it. He spent nearly three months in this *important* agency; yet it cost the Corporation only $60. But he returned with his head wonderfully confused, as was evident from his concessions at the meeting of the Board in January, by reason of the doubts, apprehensions, conflicting opinions, and reasonings, which he found prevailing in the East.

[50] Gen. Kirkland was opposed to the measure. He remarked to me, that he thought best to wait and see what the report of the committee would be. My reply was—'I presume the committee will not make a report which will preclude the necessity of a professor of Mathematics.' 'I don't know about Mathematics,' replied the general; '*I think it much more important that a young man should write a fair hand and spell well.*' This is the gentleman, it will be recollected, who thought the condition of the College such, (while he acknowledged, 'we made as good scholars, he did not doubt, as they did at Yale, and in some respects better,') 'that it could not be worse off, and it would be perfectly safe to make an experiment.' (See note 32.) Would an experiment of the general's devising be likely to add much to its reputation for science?

Before the day on which the meeting was to be holden arrived, a rumor was abroad that there would not be a quorum present; and that nothing would be done. The rumor, it was believed, was sent out from Utica. Such, it was said, would be the fact, by a son of the President of the Board, when in Clinton on a visit a few days previous to the meeting. And so, indeed, it turned out. Ten members only were present. Six members—one fourth of the whole number—resided in Utica. Gen. Kirkland was the only member present from that village; and he made his appearance about four hours subsequent to the appointed hour of the meeting. The apology for the non-attendance of members was, the state of the roads. But, bad as the travelling was, one member came a distance twice as great as that of Utica from the College; and accompanied, too, by a lady. As the presence of thirteen members is made necessary by the Charter to render their acts valid, nothing could be done. [51]

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[51] In the course of our desultory conversation, I wished the President of the Board to inform me,—supposing the College, as he had stated, was as badly off as it could be; supposing it had no reputation,—how he would account for the fact, that thirty-two young gentlemen had already been admitted at and since commencement—as great a number as had usually been admitted so early in the year? He made no reply. The General remarked, when speaking of the state of the treasury—'Our faculty have eat up $40,000 of our funds for us.' 'Why (I asked) did you put your money into the mouths of your greedy faculty?—it was your own voluntary act.'—This complaint, in substance, and I am confident in the same words, I had heard from the gentleman before; and it seemed to be made for the purpose of censuring the faculty.

If true, as the General asserted, that the Corporation of Hamilton College had spent $40,000 of their permanent funds (besides their revenue from tuition and room-rent), *merely* in supporting their faculty for fifteen years, no wonder their treasury was empty! If they have done this, they have, beyond doubt, done what the Board of Trustees of no College in our country ever did before them.

It was deeply lamented by most of the gentlemen present, that we were defeated as to the object of the meeting—as there were strong apprehensions that all the young gentlemen of the Junior class, still remaining, and most of the Sophomore class, would leave the Institution soon, if left destitute of a professor of Mathematics. The General replied, in substance, that 'he felt no concern on that ground; that our scholars might all go and welcome; that he had no fears as to scholars; that they would soon have two or three hundred here, if the Corporation would only adopt the proper measures.'

At this meeting the following memorial was presented:

"At an adjourned meeting of the students of Hamilton College, on Nov. 14th, 1827, a committee, chosen for the purpose, presented the following preamble and resolutions, which, after some discussion, were adopted, viz.

"The students of Hamilton College, aware of the low state of the Institution, fully convinced that its best interests are identified with their own, that the fondest wishes and justest expectations of the friends, of the patrons of this College, and of the community, in regard to its present condition and prospects, are not realized, and feeling a deep solicitude for its welfare, and believing that it is expedient no longer tamely to witness measures which, in their opinion, are detrimental to their own interests and to those of the Institution of which they are members, would suggest, that,

"1. Whereas the decline of this Institution has been wrongfully attributed to the maladministration of the faculty—

"2. Whereas certain measures, adopted by the Trustees, have, in their in-

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE BOARD, *Jan 9th*, 1828.

Twenty members were present, a *greater* number than at any preceding meeting (one excepted) since my connexion with the Seminary ; viz. Messrs. Kirkland, Norton, Brown, Lansing, McNiel, Williams, Keep, Eells, Dwight, Hopkins, Hart, Lothrop, Coe, Frost, Aikin, Maynard, Smith, Bronson, Gridley, Davis.

It appeared that the expectations of the public, by some means or other, were highly raised. It was rumored, *that we should have an able report from the committee, and that decisive and efficient measures would be adopted by the Board.* Mr. Smith had no concern in the report, as he had not been with the committee.

The following are the essential principles of the PLAN reported, viz :

The President shall be appointed by the Board, under an agreement that he shall tender his resignation at the expiration of —— years.

He must have the utmost extent of authority that the Charter will allow.

He shall nominate all the officers of the Institution to the Board, who shall accept or reject them ; but shall not appoint any without his nomination, or remove any without his concurrence.

He shall fix the salaries of his officers, and be responsible for their payment. But the Board will be responsible for the salary of the professor of Divinity ; whose salary shall be paid, and duties prescribed by the Board, with the assent of the President.

The President shall prescribe and change the duties of the officers, at his pleasure, in any manner not inconsistent with the established regulations of the Institution.

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fluence upon our justly revered President, and the professor of the languages, seriously affected the reputation of the Institution—and

"3. Whereas, in consequence of these measures, our very eminent instructer, the late professor of Mathematics, has left this Institution—and

"4. Whereas, on which account many students who have been induced by his high reputation as an instructer, to become members of this College, not only feel themselves deeply injured, but are unwilling, without ample satisfaction, longer to remain ;—we do *unanimously* adopt, as expressive of our sentiments on this subject, the following resolutions, viz.

"*Resolved*, That, so far from considering the faculty as having contributed to the decline, we believe that their unremitted exertions have been to advance the best interests of the Institution.

"*Resolved*, That the treatment of our respected Principal, and the professor of the languages, so deleterious in its consequences, should, and hereby does receive our decided disapprobation.

"*Resolved*, That the immediate appointment of an able professor of Mathematics is indispensably necessary.

"*Resolved*, That, unless such measures as we have shown to be necessary be pursued by the Trustees of the Institution, we shall feel ourselves under no obligation to continue its members."

It was also resolved, that the above be signed by the chairman and secretary, and presented to the Trustees.

The memorial was presented to the Board and read ; but a quorum not being present, it was again presented at the meeting in January ; and being read, was suffered to pass *in silence ! ! !*

He shall have the use of the buildings and College grounds, but keep them in repair at his own expense. As a compensation for his services, he shall receive the room-rent, tuition, and *board*.

Every student, at entering, shall deliver all his money to the President, who shall put it to his credit, and pay for whatever he shall deem necessary.

No student shall leave the College ground, unless in company with an officer, without a written permission from the President.

Every student shall retire to bed at 10 o'clock, after which his room shall be visited by an officer.

All the classes shall spend the hours of study in the presence of their instructers.

The whole time, from the hour of rising to rest, shall be employed in study, exercise, and refreshment, in a manner according to a divison of time to be prescribed by the President.

Daily exercise, at stated times, and in presence of one or more of the officers, to be made universal and indispensable.

The committee say the great objects of an enlightened education are,

1. To soften and refine the manners.
2. To give health and vigor to the body.
3. To strengthen, enrich and improve the mind.
4. To cultivate the virtuous affections of the heart, and to produce the highest possible degree of moral excellence.

The committee recommend that the intercourse between the members of the faculty and the students be free, kind, familiar, and social; calculated to give the officers a paternal care, feeling, and authority, and to produce in the students affection, confidence, and respect: and that there be frequent visits, by invitation, at the houses of the officers.

The committee further recommended that, to improve the manners of the students, *a lady of refinement and intelligence*, with a member of the faculty, should *preside* at the table, and exercise a *maternal superintendence* over the students. [52]

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[52] Neither this report, nor the report made at commencement, 1827, is to be found. Inquiry has repeatedly been made for them of the secretary and other members, and twice of the whole Board when in session: but no satisfactory answer could be given—no one could tell what had betided them; *somehow or other*, it has been remarked by the President of the Board, *they have been mislaid*. The former I heard read four or five times, with strict attention. The original draft of the latter I found in the hands of the chairman of the committee; who assured me that the copy presented to the Board was almost entirely the same. I have given above all the features of it, as I found them, with some slight variations in language, merely for the sake of brevity.

By a resolution of the Board, it was made the duty of the secretary to preserve on file all the reports of their committees. But of these reports even the secretary could give no account.

Should they, after this mysterious *abduction*, be drawn forth to light, (and who dare presume to say, judging from the past, what will not happen among us,) without having suffered mutilation, it will be found, I have no fears, that I have not only stated the substance of them, but preserved their phraseology with much correctness. A strange affair this, truly! But I will not attempt to aid the reader in his conjectures.

The committee refrained from prescribing the course of studies or the mode of instruction. They thought, perhaps, this would not comport with the high powers with which their President was to be invested. [53]

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[53] This plan, *verily*, is a *modern experiment*. For in what College, properly so called, has an experiment like this ever been attempted? Provided doubts could have existed as to the designs of the reformers, previous to the report, there were now no longer reasons for doubt. For what man of *ordinary* experience only, could expect a *College* to prosper under such an organization, without the aid of some hitherto undiscovered laws of our nature. I say nothing of the plan being a violation of the charter, nor of that feature of it pertaining to the appointment and power of the officers; however objectionable it may be thought in these respects.

Whatever might be the result of such an experiment, among a people whose habits of thinking and acting have been formed under the servile and degrading influence of arbitrary domination, certain is it, that under a government like ours, all whose institutions tend directly and powerfully to foster a spirit of liberty and independence, *such* a College never could command scholars. The youth of our country, of the age of those found in Colleges, never would enter the walls of an Institution thus organized for an education. They never would subject themselves to the continual supervision and watching of their instructers—to be treated as mere school-boys, and to be kept in leading-strings through their four years pupilage.

But, this objection aside, what would be the effect upon the youth themselves? Young men will continue to feel and to act like children, so long as you treat them as such. The unceasing watching, and the familiar and unrestrained intercourse recommended by the committee, between instructers and their pupils, are undoubtedly highly proper between parents and their children, while their children are young: and the same *intercourse*, also, at a later age, when parents are what they ought to be; and *both* equally so, in all circumstances where *mere* children are concerned.

No man thinks less favourably than I do, of treating young gentlemen in College with austerity and reserve; and of requiring from them a sort of official and involuntary deference towards their instructers. Let them be treated with kindness, affection, and courtesy; let them be treated as gentlemen, and with confidence also, so long as they are deserving of it. But such an intercourse between the officers and students of a College as is prescribed in the report, once introduced, would destroy the government of any College. One instructer in fifty, perhaps, might hold such an intercourse with his pupils without entire sacrifice of his dignity and authority. Every teacher, long conversant with collegial government, is fully sensible that, to inspire the young gentlemen committed to his care with feelings of respect and confidence towards himself, and to gain a salutary influence over them, his treatment of them must be marked with respect and confidence. Let suspicions, in any way, be once awakened in their breasts, that they are regarded by him with mistrust, that they do not possess his esteem, and from that moment his counsel and advice cease to have their proper influence. Every discerning and judicious parent is aware of this principle of the human constitution: and acts with reference to it, in the treatment of his children, when arrived at the age of discretion. Does he attempt to form them to the habits and character which he wishes them to acquire, by keeping them constantly under his eye, and permitting them never to go beyond the reach of his voice? It is by setting before them an example which shall command their respect, and is worthy of their imitation; it is by wholesome advice and instruction, and by bringing them to feel the influence of moral principles and motives, rather than by continual vigilance and inspection, that he strives to fortify them against the dangers, and prepare them to resist the enticements of the world, when they shall go forth, as one day they must, to become the formers and directors of their own fortunes.

It was instantly asked by Gen. McNiel, after the report was read, how the plan proposed, if adopted, would affect the then President of the College? A member of the committee, Mr. M. replied, that *the President had not been consulted—the committee could not say what views he would entertain on the subject—it was thought probable, however, he would not be inclined to engage in such an undertaking.* I rose at once and remarked—It is evident, Mr. Chairman, that I am entirely out of the question. I would as soon think of becoming the admiral of a navy, or the general of an army, as of engaging in such an enterprise. And depend upon it you will find no man to engage in it, who is worthy of being President of a College. No man will do it, unless he loves money more than every thing else. [54]

After a long and animated debate, first on the *constitutionality*, and secondly on the *expediency* of the PLAN, the following question was put, viz:

Shall this report be rejected? The vote was taken by ayes and noes. *Ayes*—Drs. Norton and Brown, Rev. James Eells, Rev.

By the constitution of our being, it is essential to our future comfort and usefulness, that we acquire, in childhood and youth, the habit of taking care of ourselves. To the proper formation of this habit, it is immensely important that it be early commenced. It can hardly be commenced too early.

There are moral as well as physical stamina indispensable to energy and stability of character, to be derived only from exercise and experience; and from such exercise and experience as youth are necessarily strangers to, so long as under the unceasing watching and restraint of their instructers. Does wisdom permit us to regard the constitution of nature less in the moral and intellectual, than in the physical world? Who would think of rearing the lofty elm in the shade, or the sturdy oak in the green-house?

This committee, and others of the Board who acted with them, are not to be suspected of ignorance of the laws of our nature.

In the view of the premises, then, who can possibly doubt that their intention was to convert the Institution into a Seminary for the education of boys merely, and that as a College, it should no longer exist? Certainly, gentlemen who regard their own characters as fair, upright, and honorable men, will not avow that their report was only a manœuvre—a sheer trick to effect the removal of their faculty.

[54] It was intuitively obvious, in my view of the subject, as well from their prefatory remarks, as from the whole tenor of the report itself, that the committee anticipated, with moral certainty, the resignation of the President. Otherwise, why *so much sympathy* expressed for the faculty? Why did the committee recommend the appointment of a President, and on conditions entirely new? Why did they recommend the appointment of a President at all? Why was the appointment of such an officer the first article in their report? the *sine qua non* of their scheme? the very bone, and sinew, and muscle of their monster?

True, Mr. Frost has remarked to me, [see note 48,] as has General Kirkland, that he never thought, till the January meeting, it was best that I should leave the College. But was not Mr. Frost a member of the committee? Had he not been abroad, as their agent, to obtain information? Had he no concern in the plan of the report? Was he ignorant of its character till it was read at the meeting? Had he not discernment enough to foresee intuitively, that I never would and never *could* take the College on my shoulders on such conditions? How, then, could Mr. Frost say he never thought, *till the January meeting*, it was best I should leave the College?

John Keep, Othniel Williams, Orrin Gridley, and Gerrit Smith, Esqrs., and the President of the College—8.

Noes—Hon. Ephraim Hart, Henry McNiel, John H. Lothrop, Wm. H. Maynard, Greene C. Bronson, and Sewal Hopkins, Esqrs., Rev. Henry Dwight, Noah Coe, John Frost, and Samuel C. Aikin —10.

The President of the Board, no doubt, was in opinion with the majority. Dr. Lansing, who had recently taken his seat, was excused from voting. Dr. Kendrick and William Floyd, Esq. were absent. Had they been present, it was presumed they would have voted with the minority.

The remark had previously been made by the chairman of the committee that, as their plan was an experiment, and, as they acknowledged, a doubtful one, they should not deem it expedient to attempt to carry it into effect, should there be found a respectable number of the Board in opposition to it.

The next expedient was the appointment of a committee, *ostensibly* for devising a plan in which the Board might be better agreed. The President of the Board was pleased at last, and for reasons *perfectly obvious*, to put me on a committee; but, for reasons equally obvious, I declined serving. At the request of the committee, however, I took a seat with them for a time.

As to the plan which had been reported, had it received the unanimous approbation of the Board, and they had been ever so urgent that I should remain on the conditions proposed, I never could have consented to it: for I regarded the plan as perfectly chimerical.

After a few remarks I was asked by some one of the committee whether I was willing, considering our situation, to resign my office—(for the purpose, as it was understood, of making way for the Board to carry into effect their plans.) My reply was—I have said to some of the friends of the College, that I would not resign so long as there was any possibility of saving it, should the Corporation reduce my salary to $500. But I see our situation, and so do you. There are now no hopes of saving it. It is evident a majority of the Board are bent on giving it a modification materially different from a College, and are determined that nothing shall be done as long as I am connected with it. I am unwilling to be in the way of the prosperity of the Institution. Could the Board do any thing should I resign? Is there any plan in which you could unite? The answer was—*I hope there is: at any rate, it would be in our power to make a trial.*

In these circumstances, although it was clearly foreseen that my reputation would be deeply affected by leaving the Institution in this manner, and thus indirectly acknowledging that all reported of me was true, yet it appeared to me to be my duty, notwithstanding, to do it. After much conversation, I finally remarked to the committee, that I had seriously considered the subject, (for I had for months been convinced that the spirit of opposition to me was inveterate and unyielding,) and would resign my office at commencement, on condition the Board would give me a certain sum, as a consideration for resigning. I then

left them. The committee made a report of some sort to the Board. But what the report was I know not. [55]

On the ensuing morning, I received from the Board by a committee the following communication, viz.

"*Resolved*, as it is understood that President Davis has signified his intention of resigning his office at commencement, that this Board give him —— dollars in consideration of his useful and faithful services." After much conversation, I consented that the blank should be filled with $4400. [56]

Few hours had elapsed before another communication was received, viz.

"Whereas this Board have raised $2500, by a subscription

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[55] Although not disposed, I trust, to shrink from the contest, if manifestly my duty to persevere in it, yet I clearly foresaw it would be long and painful, and that the issue, after all, must be doubtful. And while I believed that, in consequence of retiring from my office, the Institution would be at an end, as a *College*, and its respectability and usefulness materially lessened in comparison with what they might be; still I then thought there was ground to hope, that the sober sense and sound discretion of the Board would finally so far prevail, as to modify it in such a manner as to render it, in a *good degree*, respectable and useful: and there were strong reasons for fear, I believed, that an unyielding perseverance in the struggle might terminate in the complete annihilation of the Institution.

[56] It has been frequently said—provided I thought it expedient to resign my office, that I ought to have resigned it *unconditionally*, and to have cast myself on the generosity and magnanimity of the Board.—Cast myself on the generosity and magnanimity of the Board, after such treatment from them!! Others have asserted that I have no claims on the Board, beyond the period of my services. But it is evident from their proceedings, that the Board themselves had, at the time, a very different view of the matter. In all the conferences of individuals, and of their committees with me, on the subject, no doubt as to my claim was suggested. Will not Mr. Dwight recollect, when he called on me in the evening (within an hour or two after I had left the committee, as before stated,) solely to converse on the subject, that in answer to my remark, that I thought the Board ought to grant me $5000 for resigning, he replied, 'I do not think the terms unreasonable; and, if able, we ought to give it?' Has General Kirkland forgotten that, to my certain knowledge, he blamed, several years since, the President of a New-England College, for throwing himself on the generosity of the Board, although they had granted him from their treasury after resigning, $2300 or $2400; and that he remarked to me of this gentleman, 'He has spent his best days in the service of the public; he had nowhere to look but to that Board, and should not have resigned till they had made him a liberal consideration?'

How stands the matter in *foro humano?* What says the charter? *The President shall hold his office for and during his good behavior.* And if he holds his office on this condition, does he not hold his salary also on the same? Otherwise, of what avail is this provision of the charter? His office, and the salary attached to it, are a matter of contract, resting on the same foundation as all other contracts—the supreme law of the land, authorizing and sanctioning contracts. The Charter of the College is as much an expression of the will of the Legislature as any other statute; and the contract made agreeably to its provisions is as inviolable as any other contract. The only limitation as to the right of salary, as well as office (touching the case in question,) is the provision of the charter, viz. *good behavior.* The Corporation, as such, have no powers but what are derived from this instrument; and they can be exercised only in accordance with it.

The President accepts his office agreeably to the provisions of the charter;

among themselves, resolved that this sum be paid to Dr. Davis, at commencement, or secured to him, on condition that he then re-

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and so long as he performs its duties according to the conditions of the contract, or provisions of the charter, he has the same right to his office and salary as the husbandman has to his farm, which he holds according to the laws of the land. He can forfeit them only by misbehavior; and if he has behaved amiss, the Corporation have power to show it, and they are bound to show it.

The Presidency of a College is a station of high responsibilities, anxious cares, arduous labors, of great personal trials and sacrifices, and of great expense. The Regents, the framers of the Charter, had correct and comprehensive views on this subject; as might be expected of wise and honorable men. They never intended that the man who should consent to assume such responsibilities—such cares and expenses, should be liable, at any moment, to become a victim to the caprice of the Corporation. Nor did they intend, after he had spent the vigor of his days, *faithfully*, in their service, that he should be left without claim upon them for future support.

It appears from the following resolutions of the Trustees of Hamilton College, passed at its organization, that they, also, *then* thought the compensation due to those who served them faithfully was not to be estimated solely by the period of service.

"MEETING OF THE BOARD,—*July* 22*d*, 1812.

"On motion of Mr. Kirkland, Resolved, That the Board proceed to the election of a President of the College: which was done accordingly: and on counting the votes, it appeared that the Rev. Caleb Alexander was unanimously elected President of said College.

"A committee was then appointed to inform Mr. Alexander of his election. Said committee then reported that said information had been communicated to him, and in reply to which, the Rev. Mr. Alexander presented to them the following letter of resignation, which was ordered to be read; viz.

"'*Paris*, *July* 22*d*, 1812.

"GENTLEMEN—Having received, by your committee, your resolution of this date, informing me that you have unanimously appointed me President of Hamilton College, I do hereby express to you my sincere thanks for the honor bestowed on me.

"After maturely considering the subject, and reflecting on my own situation, as also that of my family, I believe it my duty, under existing circumstances, to decline accepting the appointment. Allow me to say, that I am your affectionate friend, and humble servant, C. ALEXANDER.

"To the TRUSTEES OF HAMILTON COLLEGE.

"On motion of Mr. Gold, Resolved, That whereas the Rev. Caleb Alexander was this day appointed President of Hamilton College, and did thereupon decline accepting the said office, and this Board considering themselves justly indebted to said Alexander, for his *great* and *zealous* exertions in procuring the Charter and funds of the College; to the end, therefore, that due compensation may be made to him in the premises: Resolved, that the treasurer of the Board be directed to pay to the said Caleb Alexander the sum of $1500, as soon as the same shall be received into the treasury, and within the period of six months, with interest from this date; and the further sum of $5000, in five equal annual instalments, to be computed from this day, with annual interest on the same; and that the Senior Trustee and Clerk, on behalf of this Board, execute to the said Caleb Alexander a bond or obligation accordingly, under the seal of the Corporation."

Now I do not say that the *exertions* of Mr. Alexander, for which the Corporation of Hamilton College granted him $6500, were not *great* and *zealous*; nor do I say they were not *useful*, also. But let them have been ever so great and zealous, the Corporation will not deny that they were all made in

sign his office as President of Hamilton College." This offer was rejected. [57]

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less than five months—from about the 12th of January, 1812, when Mr. Alexander espoused their cause, till the 26th of May, on which day their Charter was granted.

If it was reasonable and equitable *then*, for the Board to grant from their treasury to their President elect, on declining the office, $6500—the salary of almost four years, in consideration of his *great* and *zealous* exertions, for a period less than five months, could it be less so in 1828 to grant their President $4400—less than the salary of two and a half years, in consideration of his *faithful* and *useful* services, as they denominated them (see resolution, p. 65,) on resigning his office after serving them more than ten years; and resigning it too, at a period of life too late to engage in a new field of enterprise? Will the Board say they were *rich* then, and *poor* now? But were they *actually* richer then, without their establishment, and with donations and a grant from the state amounting to $90,000, and about twenty scholars, than they were now, with their establishment and appurtenances, worth at least $75,000, with $15,000 in their treasury, and $5000 in land, and with recently one hundred scholars? But grant they *were* richer then—does this consideration affect the nature of right and wrong? does it alter what in itself is just, where the ability to do justice is not wanting? Is it the duty of those intrusted with public money, to give more than is equitable because they *feel rich*, or less than is equitable because they *feel poor*? The Board, surely, will not acknowledge themselves guilty of prodigality in the former case; nor will they deny that they were able to grant the sum asked in the latter. But it will soon appear that the Board *now seemed* to think it wrong to take $1900 only out of their treasury, even to save the Institution from certain ruin; which, as the reformers asserted, awaited it.

And will the Corporation say that Mr. Alexander cast himself upon their *generosity*? that there was not at least an understanding—if direct assurances were not given before his election—that he should receive $6500 on condition he would decline the office? Did not Mr. A. understand that on this condition he was to be elected, and that he could be elected on no other? Such has ever been my understanding of the facts; and my information was from the best authority.

[57] It appears that after the conditions on which I would retire had been received, the Board agreed to make an effort to raise $2500 among themselves, and to proffer it to me. Since it had been often declared by the master spirits of the conspiracy against me, that 'the funds still remaining must be preserved in all events; that not a cent of them ought be taken to support their faculty; that should their treasury be entirely exhausted, they would have nothing to rely upon; and the Institution would be for ever prostrate;' after such declarations, the money still left could but be regarded, of course, as sacred treasure under all changes and emergencies—not to be touched, let what would come. After so much solicitude and concern expressed for the treasury, to invade it for *such* a purpose would have appeared not less than sacrilege. Much more consistent and honorable, to *appear* willing to contribute liberally from their *own* purses for the object. Some time after the act of subscribing had commenced, and was going on rather tardily, Dr. Brown suggested to Mr. Dwight, who sat by him, that I ought to be apprized of the proceeding. Mr. D. requested him to inform me. Dr. B. assures me, that when he returned to the Board he was greatly surprised to find that the business of subscribing had been suspended during his absence, and to be called upon for a report. The Doctor, of course, repeated to the Board my remark to him, viz. 'that it would be in vain for them to raise less (or offer me less) than $4400.' The effect was instantaneous; fresh vigor was given to their hopes and exertions. Some of the gentlemen were *now* ready to subscribe, and others, unless I am greatly mistaken, increased their subscriptions pre-

Early in the evening of the same day, a request was received from the President of the Board, that I would take my seat with them. A scene ensued which I deeply regret the necessity of describing. The design of the contrivers, as was readily perceived, was merely to produce a stage effect, expecting by this manœuvre, without doubt, an easy conquest. The following account of it is substantially, and in a high degree verbally, correct.

The President of the Board asks, as soon as I had taken my seat, '*Well, gentlemen, what is now to be done?*' A motion was instantly made to appoint a professor of Divinity. Gen. Kirkland immediately remarked, 'Gentlemen, I have said that I never would consent to take another cent out of the treasury, to support our faculty. But I have entirely changed my views on this subject. I am now prepared for a bold experiment. We can't get rid of our President—he will come to no terms with us; I will now go all lengths with him—I will give him all the help he wants—I will appoint every officer he shall nominate—I will throw all the responsibility upon him. I don't believe he will succeed, but give him a chance—let him try—I will go on till we have spent every cent in the treasury. When our money is all gone, we can send off our professors, but we can't get rid of him—he can hold on, and claim his salary and house, and we can't help ourselves. And when our money is all gone, he can take one piece of land and sell that; and then another, and sell that: and when the land is all gone, he can take our stones (i. e. the buildings,) and sell them. Now I am for a bold experiment.' [58]

I arose and replied, Have you a right, Sir, to take this course? Is it consistent with your duty? For what purpose was the Institution committed to the care of this Board? Why was it placed in *your* hands? Was it not because you were deemed wise men? And is it a characteristic of wisdom, for men to resign themselves entirely to the judgment of another—to throw all responsibility from themselves?

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viously made. Gen. Kirkland remarked—'I know Dr. Davis: it is an insult to offer him less than he has named: he will not accept it. I would as lief subscribe $400 as $100.' There was *now* no difficulty in obtaining the amount proposed. The General, I believe, subscribed $200. How then, as honorable men, could the General and his associates subscribe at all? They did not intend to raise the amount proposed, $4400. What could show more clearly the hollow-heartedness of the whole transaction.

[58] A bold experiment indeed! and a very foolish one too, I should say, had I proposed it, with his belief as to the result. But would the President come to *no terms* with the Board? Had he not offered to retire from his office for $4400? And had not the Board raised this sum among themselves, save $1900? Could the General, then, recommend an experiment which he did not believe would be successful, suffer their money to be entirely spent in carrying it on, their lands and buildings to be sold, and the College to be for ever prostrated, rather than take $1900 out of the treasury to ensure its existence and usefulness? How far the General's conduct in this instance comports with fidelity to his public trust, as a guardian of the College, and with the character which he would sustain as a man of humane, generous, and honorable feelings, I leave it with him to decide.

Some of the friends of the College, especially Mr. Keep, expressed surprise and astonishment at such a procedure. Two or three of the reformers said they would not throw *all* the responsibility on the President.

Dr. Spring was appointed professor of Divinity, with a salary of $1500, and a house.

Mr. John H. Lathrop was appointed professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, with a salary of $800.

A professorship of English Literature was established, and Mr. Daniel C. Axtell elected to the office, with the same salary. [59]

The professorships of the Greek and Latin languages were *again* abolished, and a professorship of Ancient and Modern Languages instituted in their stead. To this professorship Mr. William Kirkland, son of the President of the Board, was elceted. But, through neglect or some other cause, I believe no salary was voted him. [60]

A short time having elapsed, I was asked (by Gen. K., I believe,) 'Do you now think the College can be raised?' I answered, Should the gentlemen now elected be obtained, I have no doubt, with their assistance, and with the united and efficient co-operation of this Board, of our being able to raise it. But there is no reason to expect such a co-operation. Your hearts, it is evident, are not in this thing. After the election of these gentlemen is known, it will be said to you, 'Now your College will rise—you have made a valuable accession to your faculty.' What will be the reply? 'O, no; we could not get rid of our President—he would come to no terms with us; there was nothing else that we could do—but we have no faith in it.' Why, gentlemen, I should as soon expect to create a world, as to raise your College in such circumstances. [61]

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[59] The friends of the College, no doubt, who took any part in these appointments, acted from the same principle as if they had believed the reformers in earnest. To this measure some objected. Not that they considered such a professorship unimportant—but because their resources did not warrant it, and it was not expected of them. It was remarked, that it could not be wise, because our treasury was almost exhausted, to exhaust it *entirely* as soon as possible.

[60] For this office there were two candidates; and it is probable, from this circumstance, that more votes were given in this instance than in any other. But fourteen votes, however, were given for both. This fact shows clearly that several of the members had no agency in the appointments.

[61] My conduct in this step has been grossly misrepresented. It has been reported that, when the Board had agreed, with *great* unanimity, to place the College *altogether* into my hands, and had appointed all the officers I wished, that I unexpectedly arose and addressed them in such an offensive manner as entirely frustrated their proceedings. (See certificate of S. C. respecting Mr. Aikin, note 70.) Rumor has said the Board acted in good faith in these appointments. Dr. Hopkins has thus declared privately in my presence, and to my surprise; and others have declared before the Board, that the members had all acted sincerely, they did not doubt, in *all* they had done.—But will Mr. Dwight (who declared in an audible voice once, certainly, and I believe twice, during the progress of these appointments, 'I entirely despair of the College') say that *he* thinks they were acting sincerely? Will Mr.

A motion was instantly made and seconded by some of the reformers, that the appointments be all rescinded. But the question was lost. The members immediately left their seats. Promiscuous conversation ensued. Some of them were affected even to tears: and, indeed, some of the reformers *seemed* to be affected. [62] Several of my friends said to me, Can't you yield—can't you accept the $2500? I replied, it would do no good. Were I to leave you, this Board could do nothing. The answer was, We don't know—perhaps we could. Mr. Smith, who now acted with the friends of the College, remarked to me aside, 'I advise you to yield; I never witnessed such a spirit as is manifested by some of your brethren towards you; they are determined to dig your grave; I can't see why they should feel so. They not only say, you are not *now* fit for your office, but are whispering that you *never was* fit for it. If you stay here, they will make you miserable. [63] I replied to this gentleman, I have a fair claim on the Board for the sum named, as a consideration for resigning my office. But I would not be an obstacle to the usefulness of the College, for the sake of $1900. If I knew they would unite in some measures by which the College would be saved, I should not hesitate. I was now more apprehensive than ever, that without a great change in the Board, the Institution never could prosper; and it appeared to me to be my duty to stand, at least, till a change was effected. [64] But my friends had man-

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Frost (who also remarked, in a manner to be heard by all the members, 'I have no faith in these measures') say that *he* believes they were acting sincerely? And will the Honorable E. Hart say, that the *reformers* were acting sincerely? notwithstanding he remarked to an officer of the College, soon after, in relation to this same proceeding, 'We (i. e. the reformers) had two plans: the one was to strip the ship and lay her up—the other, to spread all sail upon her, and crowd her under as soon as possible.' The reader will judge how far a proceeding like this is becoming the character of men trusted with such high interests.

[62] I remarked to Mr. Keep, who had been recently elected a member of the Board, and had met with us but once before, 'This is not the way in which the Trustees of our New-England Colleges manage their concerns, and bring down the blessing of God upon them.' 'O no,' he replied, with deep emotion. 'Do you wonder,' said I to him, 'that this College has not been more flourishing?' He answered, 'O no, there is no secret in it now.'

[63] A highly respectable clergyman from abroad, who was here at the time, told me that Mr. Keep had remarked to him on the preceding day, 'that some of the President's brethren in the Board appeared determined on digging his grave.' This gentleman further said to me, 'I have been acquainted with many of your scholars—I have been well situated to know the reputation of the Institution, and of its officers. As I had a young man under my care who was to receive a public education, I had a personal interest in taking pains to inform myself respecting different Colleges: and I finally concluded that yours was the best place for him: and I never heard any thing against you till last summer, (1827,) and then *my information was from some of your Trustees in Utica.*'

[64] The following shows that *one* of the *reformers*, at least, agreed with me in opinion, as to the necessity of a change in the Board:—

"In a conversation held in our presence, on or about the 1st inst. the President of the Board of Trustees of Hamilton College (Gen. Kirkland)

fully supported the cause of the College and its President. I felt myself under great obligations to them. At length, in accordance with the earnest solicitations of several of them, and with their judgment rather than with my own, I went before the Board and offered to resign my office at commencement, provided they were disposed again to proffer me the $2500. I then retired. But the effort to get the sum subscribed anew was in vain. [65] Before they adjourned, they rescinded all the appointments which they had made, and left the College still, marvellous as it seems, without a Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. [66]

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remarked, in *substance*, that, in his opinion, the failure of the Trustees to devise such plans and make such efforts, last fall, as were necessary to secure the prosperity of the College, was owing to the diversity of sentiment and feeling existing among the Trustees themselves, and also between them as a body, and the faculty; that, as soon as he observed this diversity among the Trustees, he despaired of raising the College: and that it could not be raised till there should be a change in that body, as well as in the faculty.

"Aug. 9th, 1828. M. D.
H. L."

[65] This step I have ever regretted as unwise: but my peculiarly perplexed and trying situation will, I trust, in the judgment of the impartial reader, be regarded as some extenuation of my conduct.

Here the question naturally suggests itself with peculiar emphasis, Why, provided those who subscribed in the first instance acted sincerely, did they not renew their subscriptions?—Why could $800 only now be raised, as stated by Mr. Aikin (see certificate of C. S. note 70) instead of the $2500?—Was it because it was now *ascertained* that the money, if subscribed, must be paid? Had any thing occurred to render the resignation of the President, in the judgment of the reformers, less desirable? Was not the object for which they had been earnestly striving, as of vital interest to the Institution, completely in their power—and on their own conditions, too? What apology will these gentlemen offer for their conduct? Will they say they were offended with the President; and that, for this reason, as Mr. Aikin remarked (see the same note,) they would not renew their subscriptions? Let the reader judge, whether they or the President had the stronger reason for offence. But granting *they did well to be offended*, and that the President *only* was in the wrong—will they say that, on this account, they deemed it *less* desirable he should leave the College?—that they were now more ready to support him? It would seem as if they could not say this. What, *then*, will they say? Will they avow that, in discharging the duties of their high trust, they could suffer personal feelings and prejudices to govern them?—that gentlemen of their standing could be so far influenced by resentment or anger, as to disregard what was due to their own character, to the interests of the College, and to the public?

Mr. Dwight, unless I am misinformed, subscribed $600 in both instances, and exerted himself to induce others to renew their subscriptions. If I may apply the language to Mr. D. which I have heard him apply to himself, *he had become a complete radical; he had lost all confidence in Colleges* (see note 70, p. 80,) and *he* was sincere, no doubt, in his offer to give liberally to dry up one of these *fountains of corruption*.

[66] What justifiable reasons will the reformers give for annulling, *on any principle*, the appointment of the professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy? Were they not aware that a great part of the Junior class had already left the College because the professorship of Mathematics was vacant?—that the remainder of the class had been waiting with great impatience for the result of the present meeting?—and that *they*, with most of the Sophomore class, would probably leave the Institution immediately, unless the office was then filled? Had not all the classes told them in the memo-

They also appointed a new committee, consisting of Messrs. Bronson, Aikin, Lansing, Williams, and Coe, "to take into consideration the state and condition of the College, with power to devise such measures as they might deem proper for its interests, and to report the same to the Board at their next meeting." [67]

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rial, in November, that they considered the *immediate* appointment of a professor of Mathematics *indispensably* necessary; that unless such an appointment should be made by the Trustees of the Institution, they should feel themselves under no obligation to continue members of it? (See note 51.) Will the chief plotters and actors of this strange tragi-comedy acknowledge, as Dr. Hopkins has done to me, that the appointments were all rescinded because Mr. —— was not elected professor?—or, rather, as the simple fact was, because there was opposition to his election? Could these gentlemen be willing to empty the Institution of its scholars, and to lay it prostrate at once, because all would not yield *silently* to their private wishes? Could they sacrifice a public seminary of learning to personal considerations?

I was now no longer perplexed as to the path of duty. Although thick set with thorns and briers as it was, yet it lay straight before me. Were I to retire from my office, there could be no ground to hope, I was firmly persuaded, that the Institution could ever prosper in the hands of a Board with such distracted views and feelings. And if, by their insinuations, and rumors, and official proceedings, they had impaired the standing of their President, it was certain their want of fairness and ingenuousness, and their ill-advised measures, could not, when known, less impair their own, and would leave them no claim, as a *body*, to the respect and patronage of the public.

I resolved that henceforth I would stand erect, and meet the consequences; that I would at all times hold myself in readiness heartily to unite my efforts with those of the majority, should the reformers be induced to abandon their revolutionary and persecuting schemes (which there were no rational grounds to expect), and lend their exertions to sustain and promote the College; and that on no conditions would I leave my place,—God sparing my life, and giving me strength,—till I should see the Institution under the control of men of other views and feelings, and worthy of the public confidence.

I have been accused of abusing the Board at this meeting, especially Gen. Kirkland. I asked Gen. M'Niel if this was so? He replied, No, you have not abused him more than he has you; and I had no idea you had half so much firmness. That is the very difficulty with you, said I; had you not believed that I should cower before you at once, you never would have undertaken to crush me.

[67] All the committees of the Board are appointed by the President alone; and, be it known, that on no committee appointed since May, 1827—"to take into consideration the state and condition of the College, with power to devise such measures as they may deem proper for its interests, &c. &c., and to report the same to the Board at their next meeting,"—had he placed more than a single friend of the College; notwithstanding each of these committees had consisted of five members, and the friends of the College and the reformers had, at all times, been nearly equal as to numbers. How is this fact to be accounted for? And if sincere in his declaration (see note 40,) 'that he never thought, till the January meeting, it was best the President should leave the College,' how happens it the President's name does not appear—not even on the committee which was appointed in September, and was to report in January; when the express duty of this committee, as designated in the resolution of the Board, was "to report a proper course of studies, exercises, and discipline to be pursued in the Institution?" Or, in other words, as was proved by their report, to give the College a *totally* new organization? Will the General say that a single member of his committee (or of the Corporation, Dr. Brown excepted,) had been an officer in any College a single day? Will he say the President of the College had not had more experience in the stu-

Among the minutes of the acts of this session is found the following resolution; viz.: "Resolved, That the resolutions of this Board, passed at the last meeting, reducing the salaries of the President of the College and the professor of the Greek language, be rescinded."

But they had recently resolved that the *pecuniary* circumstances of the College made their resolution *necessary*. Why, then, rescind them? Had the treasury been replenished?

Such were the proceedings and results of a session of the Honorable and Reverend Corporation of Hamilton College, commencing at 10 o'clock on Wednesday, and closing at 4 o'clock on Saturday morning!!

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD, *May* 13, 1828.

Present, fifteen members, viz.: Messrs. Kirkland, Norton, Keep, Bronson, McNiel, Hart, Hopkins, Lothrop, Maynard, Gold, Williams, Gridley, Smith, Eells, Davis.

The Board having been called to order, the minutes of the last meeting were read. At the close of the minutes was found the following record; viz.: "The sum of $2500 having been raised by individual donations among the members of this Board, Resolved, That Messrs. Hart, McNiel, and Gridley be a committee to inform President Davis that this sum, thus raised, will be paid to him at the expiration of the present Collegiate year, in the event of his resigning at that time the office of President of the College. The said committee reported, verbally, that President Davis refused to accept the offer; after further proceedings of the Board, President Davis declared, verbally, to the Board, that he had changed his mind, and agreed to accept the said sum of $2500 on the conditions mentioned."

I rose instantly, and requested of the President of the Board to be informed, whether this minute was made by the direction of the Board, and with what intent? Mr. Lothrop, the Secretary, replied, that some of the members thought a minute of the proceeding desirable, and that it was made at their request. Mr. M. remarked that he was one that suggested to the Secretary that a minute of the proceeding was proper and important; as the Board might raise the sum before the next meeting. But granting the money to have been raised previous to the next meeting of

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dies and discipline of a literary Institution than all the committee together? indeed, than all the Board besides? and that he is not vastly more interested, *personally*, in the results of their measures, or that he is not considered by the Board itself as vastly more *responsible* for them than any other member? If the President of the Board is a wise man, and faithful in his station, how is it possible to conceive all this the effect of inattention, or accident? If wise, and also *honest* in his declaration, how could it be the result of design? And whence was it that the President of the College was in *no* instance ever consulted in relation to their reports, before they were formed? I will thank the General to show me a counterpart of this in the proceedings of any other College.

the Board—what possible bearing, said I, could your minute have on the subject? Could it impose on me an obligation to accept it? Unless the amount was subscribed anew, and offered me at the time, was I bound by my proposition to accept the money at any future period, provided it were subsequently raised? Had you a right to consider me *thus* bound? Certainly not. What, then, means your minute? The President of the Board made a remark or two, from which it *seemed* he was disposed to express a similar view of the subject. It had been the uniform practice of the Board to make no minutes in the records, of their resolutions and proceedings which had proved unavailing. I remarked, If any thing, Sir, in relation to this proceeding is placed on your records, why does this isolated fact stand there? Why is it not accompanied with the resolutions which preceded and gave rise to it, and the facts and circumstances connected with it; which would present, in some measure, a history of the transaction? For what end was this fact, and this fact *alone*, placed there? I appeal to the justice, to the generosity, to the magnanimity of this *honorable* Board,—will you suffer a minute to stand on your records, which can answer no possible purpose but to blast the reputation of your President, in the view of the men who may occupy our seats, of all the generations which shall come after us? Several of the reformers declared that they had no intention of wounding the feelings or character of the President. (No intention of wounding the President's feelings or character!! What else could have been their intention? And what a compliment to their own discernment! What could they suppose his feelings and character made of?) The Secretary, by a vote of the Board, was directed to expunge it. This measure, surely, stands in no need of comment.

One of the reformers, Mr. Hart, I believe, immediately wished to know of me, whether I had any terms to offer in relation to resigning? My answer was, I have no terms to offer: and I wish it to be distinctly understood, that I shall not resign my office on any terms. A committee of this Board acknowledged to me last commencement, that the Board had suggested nothing implying that you thought me less capable of performing the labors of my office than I had ever been; or that I had been less vigilant and faithful in performing them, during the preceding year, than formerly.

It was instantly moved and seconded by the reformers that the Board adjourn. Gen. McNiel, who appeared to begin to question the motives of the reformers, was opposed to the motion. He remarked, 'I think such a step would be unwise—the public would not justify us in it—it is our duty to make further efforts in favor of the College.'

I was asked whether I had any plan or measure to propose in relation to the Institution? I answered, 'I have none. Committee after committee has been appointed for devising plans and measures, and your President not put upon one of them. Those committees have formed their reports, and presented them to the Board, without even consulting a single member of your faculty.

As the Board, therefore, have undertaken to manage the College *entirely* (or exclusively) themselves, I shall look to them for plans and measures. I am the President of your College; and adopt what plan you please, I am ready to serve you to the utmost of my ability. But remember that your plan must be the plan of a College. You have no right to impose upon me the services of an instructer in an Academy, or a High School. I was invited here, Sir, as the President of your College; and the appropriate services of a President, and none else, have you a right to require of me; and none else will I perform.'

The following resolution, a short time subsequent, was introduced by Mr. Smith, viz.—"Whereas President Davis has this day expressed his determination not to resign his office, on any terms whatever: *Resolved*, therefore, that in the opinion of this Board, Ham. Coll. cannot prosper under the Presidency of Dr. Davis."

Mr. Williams rose and remarked, that he saw no end to be gained by this measure. The President has unequivocally declared to us, said the gentleman, that he shall resign his office on no terms. The substance of this resolution has twice been before us on former occasions. (On those occasions I was absent.) In one instance it was expressed, as the opinion of this Board, that the College *could* prosper with Dr. Davis at its head. And why is this subject brought forward again? Dr. Brown remarked, that he could not, in conscience, vote for the resolution. And he added, What does it imply? Were I to see an act like this passed, in relation to their President, by the Corporation of one of our eastern Colleges, I should take it for granted that he was deeply depraved—that the man was rotten to the core. And what bearing, added the Doctor, would such an act have upon the character of this Board? What would the public say of us?

The resolution was withdrawn without a vote. I was silent during the discussion. I felt no objection to the resolution's passing. [68]

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[68] Mr. Smith says in writing, "I was prepared to vote for the foregoing resolution, because I believed the President could not sustain the College, and render it prosperous, without enjoying the cordial co-operation of a decided majority of the Board; and the proceedings of the January meeting of the Board persuaded me that a decided majority of the Board *did* not and *would* not grant the President their cordial co-operation." Why, then, was Mr. S. prepared to declare by a solemn vote, that Hamilton College, in his opinion, *could not* prosper under the Presidency of Dr. Davis?—Merely, to be sure, because a *decided* majority of the Board had determined that it *should not*. But why should not this *decided* majority grant the President their co-operation? Can it be a maxim with Mr. Smith, that the majority must be yielded to because *decided*, be their principles and motives what they may? Had Mr. S. forgotten what he said to me at a private interview, but a few weeks before the January meeting, 1828? 'I have been carried too far by the feelings of a young man: I am now convinced you ought not to resign your office, as it respects either the College or yourself; and on no conditions will I consent to it.' Had he forgotten what he said *in January* (only four months previous to the above declaration in writing,) in relation to some of my opposers?—"They are determined to dig your grave—I don't see

Not long after, a motion was made by Mr. Williams to proceed to the appointment of a professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. It was *opposed* and *voted against* by the reformers; but the motion was carried, and Mr. John H. Lathrop was the *second time* elected to the office.

Subsequent to this appointment, Mr. Williams remarked, that much had been said by individuals of the Board, of the President's want of popularity; but that he had no doubt of his being as well qualified for his office as the Presidents of other Colleges. What man, asked the gentleman, would be popular in the circumstances in which he has been placed? What President of a College could be popular, be his talents what they may, when his scholars were praying for him, as *an old gray-headed sinner, leading them down to hell*, and one of his professors *writing letters against him?*

Some of the reformers *really* affected surprise at these remarks, as though the subjects were new to them. Mr. Hart asked, Why has not this thing, if known, been attended to? The answer was, It *was* known: a member of this Board, Mr. Ford, moved for the appointment of a committee, just twelve months since, in relation to this very subject, as the Board well knew, and remarked, at the time, If what I have heard of one of our professors is true, I am prepared to cut him off this day. (See page 33.) If you was acquainted with the fact, said Mr. Hart to me, why did you not inform the committee? It was not my duty, I replied, to go to the committee with a complaint against an officer: it was their duty to seek information: but the committee *themselves* were acquainted with the fact. I did, however, say to Gen. Kirkland, about three weeks previous to their report, that I had in my pocket a copy of the professor's letter, and could show it to him. He barely replied, If the committee wish it, they can call for it. But the committee never did call for it. (See note 39.) And what was their report to the Board?—"Your committee have inquired respecting the officer alluded to by the members who moved for the committee, and have found nothing improper in his conduct of a specific character." (See page 38.)

To these remarks, neither Gen. Kirkland, the secretary, nor another member of the committee, who was present, and who were the members principally (if not the only members) concerned in forming the report, made any reply. No wonder that they were silent.

A resolution was now introduced and passed for abolishing the professorships of the Greek and Roman languages, and for instituting a professorship of the languages in their stead. This was the *third time*, it will be remembered, that these professorships were abolished.

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why they should feel so" (see p. 70.) And is it possible that Mr. S., as a man of honor or a Christian, could persuade himself, because they were persisting in their work, and were *determined* to persist in it till accomplished, that it had become his duty to seize a spade and help them? Sure I am, that Mr. Smith's resolution, and his readiness to vote for it, could not have been the result of *sober reflection*.

The Board finally adjourned,—remarkable as it may seem, judging from their former conduct—without appointing, as formerly, a committee, "to take into consideration the state and condition of the College, with power to devise such measures as they might deem proper for its interests, and to report the same to the Board at their next meeting." And, what may appear still more remarkable, they adjourned without even rescinding their resolutions, appointing a professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and abolishing the professorships of the Greek and Latin languages. But there is, in fact, no reason for surprise; for some of the reformers, it is presumed, began now to perceive they had been deluded, and voted with the friends of the College. At the close of the meeting, Gen. McNeil resigned his seat.

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD, *Commencement, Aug.* 26, 1828.

Present, seventeen members, viz. Messrs. Kirkland, Norton, Lothrop, Lansing, Brown, Dwight, Smith, Frost, Coe, Aikin, Bristoll, Gridley, Knox, Hopkins, Williams, Hart, Davis.

The meeting being opened, the following memorial was presented, signed by about 200 of the most respectable inhabitants of the neighboring towns. It has been remarked, that five or six hundred signatures might have been procured, with very little pains, had it been thought important.

"At a meeting of the inhabitants of the village of Clinton and its vicinity, held on the 15th day of August inst. for the purpose of taking into consideration the present state of Hamilton College,

"*Resolved*, that the following memorial be presented to the Board of Trustees of said Institution, at their next meeting.

"GENTLEMEN—We, whose names are undersigned, believing the prosperity of the Institution under your care is of vital importance to the welfare of community, and in consideration of your being the constituted guardians of its interests and its funds, we take the liberty to say to you, that we deeply deplore its present unhappy and depressed condition. As many of the inhabitants of this vicinity have contributed liberally (and in some instances, to themselves injuriously,) to the funds of this *once flourishing Institution*, we trust you will not deem it disrespectful to yourselves, if we inquire what causes have brought it to its *now* degraded state. With every possible advantage of location, and having for several years diffused its blessings to our own and our sister States, we have confidently anticipated the continuance of these blessings to future generations. Judge, then, of our surprise, grief, and mortification, in witnessing its depression. Having understood, gentlemen, that the College funds were nearly exhausted, we would respectfully inquire whether such is the fact. Feeling a deep interest and solicitude for the prosperity and continuance of this seminary, we would respectfully request you to disclose to us your determination relative to its future destiny. ——Dated Clinton, Aug. 15th, 1828."

The above memorial was read, but no further notice taken of

it. Mr. Hart remarked, '*It is the same question that we are asking.*' Gen. K. observed, '*I did not know before that the people in the vicinity knew that there was a college here.*'

Soon after, the following resolutions were introduced by Mr. Smith, viz.—*Resolved*,

"1. That the officers of the College all be dismissed, with the exception of the President.

"2. That the doors of the College be closed, for a time, immediately after commencement.

"3. That one year's salary be voted the President, and that it be urged upon him, as his duty, to resign his office."

'It is presumed, added Mr. Smith, the President will not think of remaining, since he will have no services to perform.'

I immediately remarked, As the previous resolutions are connected with the last, I wish the Board to understand, that I shall not resign my office at present, on any conditions. I repeated the reasons for this course, if I mistake not, which were given before the Board in May; and added, that my resignation, in such circumstances, would be virtually an acknowledgment to the world, that the reports in circulation were true, and that the prostrate condition of the College was to be attributed principally to myself. [69]

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[69] To the above remarks, Mr. Smith replied, 'I have ever entertained high respect for our President; but it seems, when the gentleman has once formed his purpose, he can never change. I would address him in the words of another; the man who never changes never corrects an error.' These expressions of Mr. S. were accompanied with a *look*, and *tone*, and *emphasis*, and *gesture* which indicated clearly (I am sorry to say) the intention of this young man to bear me down on the spot, with all my gray hairs. I replied to the chair, 'I trust, Sir, I shall ever be willing to change, when I see reasons for it; but I hope and pray I may never see reasons to do it, so often as *that* gentleman has; and I know not by what landmarks, as a Christian, his conduct is guided.*

I deeply regret that the course of Mr. Smith has not been more uniform and consistent with itself. At the interview previously alluded to (a little

* It has been reported by some of the members, I have understood, that I have been angry before the Board: but in no instance, excepting the above, have I failed to possess perfect command over my feelings, or been betrayed by them into expressions which I see cause to regret. That my feelings have often been excited, and strongly excited, I frankly acknowledge; nor do I blush to acknowledge it. I was placed in a peculiar and most trying situation. I was acting on the defensive. Men, skilled in all the chicanery of the bar, and some, I have reason to fear, in a *different* kind of chicanery, were carefully watching to ensnare me; and no pains seem to have been spared to insult and provoke me. Who, I would ask, that is made of flesh and blood, could, in such circumstances, help feeling strongly? But in no instance, if I know myself, *has the sun gone down upon my wrath.* At this meeting, Mr. Dwight wished, in presence of the Board, to know whether, 'provided all the members were to say they thought it my duty to resign, I should be disposed to do it?' My reply was, 'I am under no obligation to answer your question.' He added, 'I presume it is not the opinion of all the members; but I should be glad to know what you would do, if you knew it was their opinion.' I answered in substance, 'It will be in season, Sir, for me to tell you, when I *know* that such is their opinion.' The bird saw the snare, and the fowler failed of his prey.

Mr. Williams argued that the Corporation had no right to close the doors of the College; that such an act, in his view, would be a forfeiture of their charter, and would prove the final dissolution of the Institution; that to close the doors of the College, with such an establishment in their hands, and a fund of $20,000, would be totally unjustifiable. Sentiments, substantially the same, were advanced by other friends of the College. The resolutions, after much discussion, were at last withdrawn without a vote.

A short time subsequently, a resolution was offered by Mr. Williams, in the following words, viz.

"The Rev. Henry Davis having signified to this Board that he shall not at present resign the office of President of this Institution on any terms: *Resolved*, That it becomes the duty of the Board to fill up the vacancies existing in the College faculty, and to make a united and vigorous effort to sustain and continue the College in operation."

By some of the reformers this resolution was earnestly opposed: they objected to calling for a vote on the question. Mr. Dwight remarked, *Should we* (the reformers,) *vote against it, the blame of stopping the College would fall entirely upon us.* The following was then offered by Mr. Williams as a substitute, viz. "*Re-*

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before the January meeting) he remarked, in speaking of a certain gentleman, in relation to the College, 'I know he was always unpopular, and he always will be: but if all the rest of your faculty are popular, I should think you might get along with one unpopular officer.' I acknowledge that at the January meeting, Mr. Smith, in the main, supported me manfully. But he nominated, notwithstanding, and warmly advocated the election of this *ever-to-be unpopular* gentleman; and that too, when some of the *chiefs* of the reformers had declared they would place the College entirely into the hands of the President, and throw all the responsibility upon him. Why should Mr. Smith be so desirous to impose an *unpopular* officer upon the College? Could it be from pure regard for the Institution? or because the gentleman's connexions, as he remarked before the Board, were *highly respectable?*

Not long subsequent to the meeting in January, I was asked by Mr. S., in the following words, precisely, 'Can you tell me why it is that you are so unpopular?' Mr. S. had again changed his opinion. It seems, however, from the nature of his question, that the *fact* was a matter of surprise to him; that he was ignorant of the cause. Is it not possible that some of the members, whom he regarded as *highly respectable*, had assured him it *must* be so, because they had resolved that *so it should be?* See also, notes 36, 42, 68, 63, and 72, in connexion with the text.

It is due to Mr. Smith, to say, that I have ever regarded, and do still regard him with affection and esteem. I would remark, if the term might be allowed, that I have been proud of him as my pupil. That he is my personal enemy, I have never believed. Not even for a moment have I suspected that *absolutely*, he wished me any harm. I ascribe his changefulness and discrepancies of conduct to that ardency of temperament, and versatility of feeling, which may be found in hearts and minds of the purest mould. When a few more years shall have gone over his head, and he shall have been a little sobered by reflection, and chastened by the buffetings of the world, it is to be hoped he will manifest a steadfastness of purpose, and a consistency of action, which, with his talents, his wealth, and his Christian philanthropy, will render him a blessing and an honor to his generation.

solved, That the Board now proceed to fill the vacancies in the faculty of the College."

The votes, being called for by ayes and noes, stood as follows, viz. Ayes—Drs. Norton and Brown, Rev. J. Eells, Messrs. Williams, Gridley, Hopkins, Hart, Knox, Bristoll, and the President of the College—10. Noes—Mr. *Smith*, Rev. Messrs. *Lansing*, *Dwight*, *Coe*, *Frost* and *Aikin*—6. Gen. Kirkland, as his vote could not affect the decision, declined voting. Mr. Dwight and his five associates were, it seems, after all, willing, by taking a bold and inflexible stand, to prostrate the College at once, and to assume the responsibility. [70] Mr. Daniel C. Axtell was ap-

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[70] As to these, my brethren, Messrs. Dwight, Lansing, Aikin, Frost, and Coe, I have had great reason to regard them as my warm, steadfast, personal friends. We had co-operated with the utmost harmony, and as I ever believed, with ardent and undoubting mutual affection and confidence, for the promotion of the best of causes. Often had we "taken sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

At the time of the difficulties consequent on the firing and bursting of the cannon, Mr. Frost justified and defended, before the Board, the measures adopted by the faculty with great firmness. He remarked, as I distinctly recollect, 'We are under immense obligations to our faculty; they have saved our College for us; they have had courage and firmness to do for us what we undertook to do, but shrunk from it.'

Painful indeed, then, is the conviction—which is irresistible from the proceedings of the Board, and from other facts already related, that, for some cause or other, these brethren, for the last two years or more, have been obstinately and virulently opposed to me and the friends of the College, in our efforts in favor of it; and they appear, as has often been remarked, to have given themselves up to the guidance of men, for whose opinions—on some subjects at least, and of vital interest too—it has been thought they had but little deference: and to be heartily uniting with them in their exertions to prostrate the President of the College—and, if it could not be done without, to lay prostrate the Institution along with him.

In regard to Mr. Dwight's opposition, there can be no doubt as to the cause. He remarked to me in May, 1827, 'I have become a complete radical; I am opposed to all Colleges; there is not one in the United States to which I would send a son; but I would as soon send a son to Hamilton as to any other.' Is it not evident from this remark, that Mr. Dwight *then* thought as favorably of Hamilton College as of any other? Why, then, at commencement, only three months subsequent, did he strenuously oppose conferring honorary degrees; and because, as he declared before the Board, the College was so low in reputation that no gentleman would deem it an honor to be presented with a degree from it? Whence this great and sudden change in the opinion of this gentleman? But he had twice been in Utica during the summer. Some of the Board in that village, as I know, conversed much with him while there, respecting the College. Is it not possible that he *there* learned *the College could not be worse off?* In relation to questions put to him at the same time, he said, 'I wish an institution so organized and governed, that if my son is in it, I can feel just as certain, when I retire to rest at night, that he is out of danger, as if under my own roof. I would banish for ever the Greek and Roman classics, and substitute, perhaps, extracts from the Fathers.'

After the revolution had been agreed upon, perhaps commenced, Mr. Dwight remarked to Gen. Kirkland, as Mr. Smith tells me he was informed by the General, that there could be no doubt as to the President's qualifications; but he was an old-fashioned man and would not do for them. See his

pointed professor of Languages. Mr. J. H. Lathrop, professor elect of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, not having given his answer, and being in the vicinity, the Board adjourned till 9 o'clock the ensuing morning, for the purpose of receiving it. Mr.

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remark (note 46,) that he wished to see every thing swept from the hill but just the buildings. Mr. D. has not been actuated, I am fully convinced, by religious considerations of a *personal* nature. (But is a man, *solely* because he is so *unfortunate* as to have become an *old-fashioned man*, to be crushed? Is he to be swept away as "the thistle before the whirlwind?" Let Mr. Dwight conceive himself to have become an old-fashioned man—would he think such treatment kind from a *new-fashioned man*, a younger brother?)

At the meeting of the Board in January, 1828, I asked Dr. Lansing, in the presence of Dr. Norton, the following question, viz.: 'Have you ever heard, Brother Lansing, that I am intemperate?' He replied, 'I never have.' 'Are you confident,' said I, 'that you never have? I have been led to suspect, from a circumstance which has come to my knowledge, that you had heard something of the kind at the west.' He instantly answered, 'I am confident I never have;' and seemed surprised at the question. 'How, then,' I asked, 'could you go to Dr. H., of Clinton, at commencement, and inquire of him, Is it true that the President of the College is intemperate!' He answered, 'Does Dr. H. say I asked him the question?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'he tells me so.' Dr. Lansing remarked, 'I have no recollection of it.' 'It is very surprising,' said I. 'Had I heard any suggestion of the kind of you, and had asked a gentleman in Auburn, Is it true that my brother Dr. Lansing is intemperate? why, I should never have forgotten it; I should have remembered it to my dying day.' He again replied, 'I have no recollection of it, but will think of it.' A short time after, he came to me and said, 'I have been thinking of that subject: a very good friend of yours in the Board suggested to me last summer, that he thought you indicated some symptoms of intellectual decay. I did inquire of Dr. H. whether there were grounds for such an opinion. It then occurred to me, that a young man who left your College five or six years ago, in rather unpleasant circumstances, did say something of your being intemperate; but I thought little of it at the time; and I believe I inquired of Dr. H. in regard to that also. But I supposed Dr. H. one of your best friends, and I had no expectation of his mentioning it to any one.' (Question for the casuist—How far does the absence of expectation in Dr. L. extenuate the matter? See the apology of the professor for his letter, at the close of note 31. Are not these gentlemen of the same school of ethics? To how many persons need such a letter be written, without *expectation of its being shown to any one*—or of how many of a man's *best friends* the question of Dr. L. asked, in order *essentially* to impair public confidence in him? What admirable expedients to render a man *unfit for his place!*) He remarked to me at this interview, 'The Corporation have abused you: had I been present at the last meeting, I should have opposed their measures' (alluding particularly, as I supposed, to their reducing my salary.) And he added, '*I am in none of their plans; I know none of their secrets.*' Yet Dr. Lansing had his *own* plan. For he remarked to Dr. H. at the same interview, in allusion to the President, '*You know, Dr., when the head is decaying, you must cut it off.*' (A *new measure* this for saving life!) A gentleman worthy of all confidence assured me, within a week after Commencement, that he received this fact from Dr. H. himself. During the session, subsequently, Dr. L. appeared on the side of the College. Some of my friends know I afterward thought we might expect his co-operation. He remarked to a gentleman in Utica, a day or two after the adjournment, 'that he was surprised to find so much *radicalism* in the Board, but had a clear conscience in all he had done.' (Did Dr. L. *now* feel that his embarrassment rendered it expedient to *seem* to be in favor of the President?)

As mysterious as this matter was, on the supposition that Dr. Lansing was still my friend, and ever willing, *as he professes*, to treat others as he wishes himself to be treated, I endeavored to persuade myself he was actuated by no unkind feelings towards me, and that, in some way or other, under the

Lathrop's answer was in the negative. The only reason suggested by him for declining the office was a want of harmony in the Board of Trustees.

The reformers, in general, had uniformly and strenuously re-

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influence of that strong but momentary excitement to which some men are constitutionally subject, he had suddenly and inconsiderately made the inquiry, and almost as suddenly forgotten it. Dr. P. I presume, who was at my house at this time, will recollect, that in a conversation on this subject, we both expressed the opinion that Dr. L. was an honest man; that I then was unwilling to believe he had any intention of injuring me. But my mind, from necessity, was intensely occupied with the momentous crisis of the College and my own painful situation. I had neither time nor ability for calm reflection and a careful comparison of the circumstances of Dr. L's. statement. But after mature reflection, I could not feel satisfied. I addressed him on the subject. It appeared my duty to give him an opportunity to relieve my feelings. But my letter was not answered. At my first subsequent interview with Dr. L. I remarked to him, that, from the known laws of our nature, I could see no possible way of accounting for his not being able, *at once*, to recollect his question to Dr. H. put but a few months before, on a subject so deeply interesting and impressive to his own mind [since it solemnly and vitally affected the character of a friend and brother,] when he could recollect *so easily*, as it seemed, the previous suggestion of my friend respecting intellectual decay; and, also, after five or six years had elapsed, what was said by the young man, of which, too, as he had acknowledged to me, he thought little at the time.

His only reply was, '*So it is.*' But a day is coming *which will reveal every man's work, of what sort it is*—and to that day we must leave it. What is equally surprising, Dr. Lansing declared to me in Nov. 1829, 'I have ever been on your side: I have done all I could to support you.'

A gentleman, whose veracity Mr. Coe has no disposition to call in question, gives me the following assurance, viz.

"During the month of Dec. last, [1827,] in a conversation with the Rev. Noah Coe, respecting Hamilton College, he remarked, that they should have a warm time of it at the next meeting, and that something must be done, or the College must go down. (That is, the meeting then approaching, in January. This communication was made to me by the gentleman about two weeks before the January meeting, and about two weeks after his interview with Mr. Coe.) I then asked him what the difficulty was. He observed, that the President was unpopular, and not known *even* in Utica, excepting by a few families.* I then asked him what they calculated to do in this case. He replied, that they thought of trying to get Mr. B——; and, provided they obtained him, the College would rise again; that he [Mr. B——] was a popular preacher; that President Davis was not known as a preacher; and that it was necessary the President of the College should be a popular preacher. I then asked if the Corporation would be in favor of Mr. B——. His answer was, Mr. Frost, Mr. Aikin, Mr. Lansing, and a number of others were in favor of him; and added, that he had no doubt, if President Davis was out of the way, that the College would rise again. He remarked, that

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* Mr. Coe's light on this subject was reflected, I have no doubt, from his pole-star in Utica. Verily, according to the reiterated declarations of some of the Board, the President of their College must be a strange man—a very strange man—altogether *sui generis*. Notwithstanding he had preached in Utica—had attended repeatedly the sessions of the Presbytery and other public occasions in that village—was personally acquainted, he believes, with most of the lawyers and merchants of distinction, and many other gentlemen there, notwithstanding the loud and long clamours which had been raised there, again and again, against him and the College—yet, strange to tell, he was not known even in that place, excepting by a *few* families; and, although he was unknown, he was unpopular. What a phenomenon!!

sisted every measure proposed for sustaining the College with its President. It had repeatedly been asserted by them, before the Board and elsewhere, *that, somehow or other, he was so unpopular, that all efforts under him would be in vain—that they would*

Gen. Kirkland was opposed to the President; and from the conversation of Mr. Coe it was evident they were relying very much on Gen. Kirkland's influence to get the President away. Some of my children, who were present, recollect distinctly the circumstances. L. L."

This gentleman remarked—'After Mr. Coe had left my house, my children expressed surprise and grief.' And he added, 'Mr. C. talked of little but the President and College the whole afternoon and evening.'

But what said the General to me in May, 1828? (See note 40.) 'You have misapprehended my views. I never thought, till the January meeting, [the same year,] it was best that you should leave the College.' How was it possible, then, that Mr. Coe should know four weeks at least antecedent to the January meeting, that Gen. Kirkland was *opposed* to the President, when the general himself, it *seems*, was not conscious of it? How, at this time, considering the General's views of the subject, could Mr. Coe and others be calculating on *his* influence in their efforts to remove the President?

Mr. Coe will not deny that he spoke before his own son, then a member of Hamilton College (in Nov. or Dec. 1827,) in such a manner of the President, as to excite deep regret in the minds of some of his church who were present. Could a wise parent do so? And would it be strange if his son were *injured* by it?

Mr. Coe will not deny, when a gentleman remarked to him, in Whitesboro', at the examination of Oneida Academy, in the summer of 1828, 'If the members of the Corporation who are opposed to the President would resign their seats, and suffer them to be filled by other men, [or expressed himself in language substantially the same,] the College would rise again,' that he replied, 'I never will resign; and I will do all I can to prevent others from re signing'—and when the same gentleman further remarked to him, 'You, the Corporation, have made the President unpopular, by proclaiming that he is so,' that he (Mr. Coe,) made no reply.

Mr. Coe will not deny, when I asked him in Feb. 1828, (two months after his remark, 'that they thought of trying to get Mr, B——,') in the presence of a gentleman in Utica, the following question, viz.—Supposing I should leave the College (or resign my office,) who could you, or who would you (i. e. the Corporation,) get in my place? that he (Mr. Coe) answered—'I don't know; I have not thought of any one.'

Mr. Coe will not deny, that he declared before the Board, and in my presence, at their meeting in Aug. 1828, 'We ought to speak our sentiments plainly—Dr. Davis is not the man for us—it is utterly in vain for us to think of raising the College with him at the head of it.'

Mr. Coe will not deny, that he declared (in the presence of several persons, it is believed,) as late as Jan. 1830, that Hamilton College, in his opinion, could never rise under the Presidency of Dr. Davis; and that, when asked for the reasons of his opinion, by a member of the College who was present, he gave none, excepting that he was unpopular, and did not appear often enough before the public as an author.

I say Mr. Coe will not deny these things, for they are susceptible of perfectly satisfactory proof.

Mr. Frost will not deny, that he remarked, in my house, at the January meeting, 1828—'We have already too many Colleges: some of them must go down—and Hamilton College may as well go down as any other.' Mr. Frost will not deny, when asked on the same occasion, 'Where can you find a man who will take the Presidency of the College, according to the arrangement proposed by the committee? that he replied, 'I know of no one—I

necessarily be the means of exhausting the treasury, and leaving the College entirely without pecuniary resources. After the an-

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have thought of no one for the place (or in particular.) But I don't doubt but a man might soon lay up $5000 a year.'

Mr. Frost will not deny, that he has spoken unfavorably, within the last two years, of the President of Hamilton College, in Albany—has said there was much dissatisfaction with him—and intimated, in a manner too plain to be misunderstood, to one gentleman of *great respectability* there, that the Institution never could rise till the President was out of the way.

Mr. Frost will not deny that he said to a gentleman in Oneida county of whom he was soliciting aid for the Oneida academy—'Our Colleges in my opinion will all go down; and as for Hamilton College, *it must go down.*' (Why then did not Mr. F. resign his seat in the Board? Would he remain to help pull the College down?)

Mr. Frost will recollect that these things were said before substantial eye and ear witnesses.

Within that portion of the state of N. York, to almost the whole of which Hamilton College is more accessible than any other (with the exception of the infant seminary at Geneva, under the exclusive care of a particular Christian communion,) there are three synods, viz. Genessee, Geneva, and Utica, embracing 360 churches,—more than one sixth part of all the (2970) Presbyterian churches within the United States,—besides a great number of churches of other denominations. The greater part of this region, with a population of more than 800,000, naturally looks to Hamilton College as the place for the education of its sons. Granting that we *have* too many Colleges, how can Mr. Frost, as a wise man, think that Hamilton College can be well spared?—Mr. F. thinks widely different from a vast majority of his brethren. It is their opinion, as I well know, that it is *immemsely* important this College should be sustained, and sustained vigorously. Mr. F. is no enemy to education; he surely cannot think it desirable that our young men should go *abroad* for their education. Some believe that Mr. Frost thinks that institutions, on a different plan from Colleges, may be raised up, which would better subserve the purposes of education (at least so far as the education of ministers of the gospel is concerned;) and that he and the other members of the Board who are of the *new school*, have been hoping that Oneida Academy would be benefited by the prostration of Hamilton College. But Mr. Aikin remarked to Dr. Brown, long since, as I am assured by the Doctor, 'that they (i. e. he and the other Trustees who are of the *new school,*) were not acting with reference to Oneida Academy, as had been reported; that if such was their object, they should wish President Davis to remain in the College—for his remaining there would be worth $50,000 to the Academy.' It has for some time been well understood by the public, that President D. remains, and, for aught they know, he is likely to remain, but is there any evidence that the treasury of Oneida Academy has, in consequence of it, yet been greatly benefited?

But if Mr. Frost, at the January meeting, could say, in relation to the Presidency, 'I know of no one—I have thought of no one for the place (or in particular):' if Dr. Lansing could say, at the same time, 'I am in none of their plans—I know none of their secrets:' and if Mr. Coe could say, three weeks subsequent to the same meeting, 'I have not thought of any man for his place' (viz. the President's:) how, then, was it *possible* for Mr. Coe to know, four weeks before this self-same meeting, 'that they [i. e. the Corporation,] thought of trying to get Mr. B—— for the place?' and 'that Mr. Frost, Mr. Aikin, Dr. Lansing, (himself too, unquestionably,) and a number of others were in favor of Mr. B——?' With what a wonderful faculty must this good man be gifted!

swer of Mr. Lathrop was received, Dr. Brown rose and remarked —'That in the present distracted state of the Board nothing could be done; that remaining as they then were, the destruction of the Institution was inevitable; that every man who should be elected to an office in it would reason and decide as Mr. Lathrop had done: that it was idle to think of inviting any gentleman to the College so long as the Corporation were at variance.' Dr. B. added, 'In these circumstances, I am authorized to say (as the great objection to every plan for supporting the College with its present faculty, is, that its funds would soon be exhausted,) that there are several gentlemen, perfectly responsible, some in the

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In March, 1828, a gentleman, whose uprightness and purity of intention no one knowing him will question, remarked to me, that he had for some weeks thought it his duty to converse with me on a subject of great delicacy, but had not felt courage or resolution enough to call before. I requested him to lay aside all formality, and to express himself with entire freedom. He then remarked, "The subject alluded to is your conduct before the Trustees of the College, at their late meeting in January, an account of which I have received from Mr. Aikin, of Utica, with great pain."

After giving me the account received from Mr. Aikin, and hearing from me a statement of *all* the proceedings of the Board, and of the whole of my own conduct on the occasion, he expressed great surprise that Mr. A. should give him so partial and incorrect an account. He acknowledged that the impression made upon his mind (granting, no doubt, my statement to be correct,) was wide from the truth, and wished me to call on Mr. A., and converse with him.

At my request, he promised to commit the account which he had from Mr. A. to writing; and on the day following I received from him the following communication, viz.—

"In the course of a conversation in Utica, in January, 1828, respecting Hamilton College, the following were the impressions which I received, viz.

"That, at the late meeting of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Davis had been recommended to resign, and had been requested to state the terms on which he would do it.

"That Dr. Davis had assented to receive $4400 as an equitable compensation for his resigning.

"That the Board, not deeming it dutiful to appropriate money for this purpose from the public funds, resorted to a private subscription among themselves; and raising $2500, offered them to Dr. Davis, in lieu of the $4400 which he had stipulated.

"That Dr. Davis refused this offer.

"That the Board then, with *great* unanimity, consented to put the College altogether into the hands of Dr. Davis, and, throwing all the responsibility upon him, to make whatever appointments for that purpose he should wish.

"That Dr. Davis, in consequence, made several (I think three) nominations, which were immediately assented to by the Board.*

"That Dr. Davis then rose quite unexpectedly, and declared, that under such

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* What! put the College *altogether* into the hands of the President—throw *all* the responsibility upon him, and yet not suffer him to select his own aids? Is this consistency? is it justice?

Will Mr. Aikin say *openly* that I made more than two nominations? Will he say that any man whom I nominated was elected, with the exception of Dr. Spring? *Will* he tell me that the other gentleman whom I nominated *was* elected?

Is it possible that Mr. A. is so void of discernment as not to have perceived the insincerity of the reformers? Why, then, by his partial statements, would he induce others to think them sincere?

Board and some out of it, who stand ready to give their pledge—provided those members, who are opposed to an effort to sustain the Institution with its present faculty, will retire from their seats and suffer them to be filled with men who can cordially unite with the rest of the Board and the faculty—that the funds of the College shall be in as good a state at the close of five years, as they now are.'

As this proposition was new, and as some of the reformers had

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a Board nothing could be done ; that he had no confidence in them, and that it would be quite useless to attempt any thing in favor of the College while they presided ; and that he accompanied these declarations by now consenting to accept the $2500.

"That the freedom of Dr. Davis excited much tumult of feeling in the members of the Board, and gave great offence ; that many of them who had subscribed liberally refused to renew their subscriptions ; that only $800 could now be raised, and this being inadequate, the Board had broken up in despair, and left every thing undecided.———March 14th, 1828. S. C."

But a few weeks subsequent to the receipt of the above communication, I inquired of S. C. whether he was *confident* his information respecting the proceedings of the Board in January was received from Mr. Aikin? 'Such certainly, he replied, is my impression ; I think I cannot have received it from any one else.' But Mr. Aikin, said I, declares to me positively that he gave you no such information. He says you anxiously inquired of him about the proceedings of the meeting; that he cautiously avoided giving you any account of them, and advised you to call on me for information.

The gentleman expressed great surprise at these remarks. He inquired whether Mr. Frost or G. were members of the Board? I replied that Mr. Frost was a member. After much conversation and not a little embarrassment on his part, he remarked, 'My impression still is that Mr. Aikin gave me the information ; but Mr. Aikin is a good man, and if he denies it, I must think, that, *somehow or other*, I am deceived.' Now carefully compare the statement in the above certificate with the facts as presented in the narrative. Whether such a misrepresentation, with all the circumstances, as it would seem, necessarily fresh in the memory, (two or three weeks only having elapsed since the occurrence,) is to be ascribed to a mind strangely prone to forget, or too much influenced by prejudice to state facts as they were, or too inaccurate, or too regardless of consequences to state them correctly, an impartial public must judge.

Be it remembered, that the above certificate was given only two months subsequent to the meeting ; that the information, of course, had been received within that time ; and that it had been a *burden* to the gentleman's mind. Now can it be believed that, in such circumstances, his recollection could fail him, either as to the facts, or as to his informant?

But admitting it possible, in this age and region of wonders, (*credat Judæus apella*,) that S. C. did not receive his information from Mr. A.—still it must have been derived from the reformers, and shows the character of the means they have used to gain their end. For surely no one would *create* such a story ; and even the good man himself, I trust, will not ascribe his impressions to inspiration. But so it was, that another gentleman, whose word no one can distrust, has assured me that Mr. Aikin, about the same time, gave him an account of my conduct and the proceedings of the Board in January, similar to what is contained in the certificate of Mr. S. C. *He* also expressed much surprise at Mr. A.'s statement, when made acquainted with *all* the facts. Yet *his* confidence in his senses remained *wholly* unshaken.

The following assurance is from an unquestionable source :

"In a conversation respecting Hamilton College, during the month of May

already retired, the President of the Board suggested that we should hold an adjourned meeting. The Board adjourned to meet in three weeks from Commencement.

ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE BOARD, *Sept. 17th*, 1828.

Present, eighteen members, viz.:—Messrs. Kirkland, Kendrick, Brown, Norton, Williams, Keep, Eells, Coe, Frost, Lothrop, Bristoll, Gridley, Maynard, Gold, Bronson, Aikin, Hopkins, Davis.

The security as to the funds, tendered at the last meeting, being called for, Mr. Gridley said, that he felt it incumbent on him to remark, that he was one of the number concerned in the offer which was made; and I, then stood ready, said he, to give the pledge: but as three weeks have since elapsed, in consequence

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last, if I am not mistaken, with Mr. B. [a member of Mr. Aikin's church] in Utica, he informed me that the Rev. Mr. Aikin, one of the Board of Trustees, in answer to the question, asked in his [Mr. B.'s] presence, What is the difficulty with the College? replied, 'Nothing but the President is in the way.'

"Understanding that Mr. Aikin denied having said this, I informed Mr. B. of it. His reply was, 'I don't care if Mr. Aikin does deny it: I did hear him say it, and two or three others likewise.'——Aug. 1828. N. J."

Having inquired of Mr. Aikin whether he ever had made such a remark of me as the above, and received from him an unequivocal declaration that he had not,—I then called on Mr. B. myself, and stated to him precisely what I had heard. He assured me that my information respecting the question and Mr. Aikin's reply was correct; and insinuated that he had heard from other Trustees, in Utica, what was tantamount to it; but did not disclose their names. 'I ought, perhaps, to have added,' said Mr. B. to me, 'that Mr. Aikin remarked at the same time, President Davis was once the most popular President in the United States (or in New-England,) but in *some way or other*, public sentiment is now so much against him, he can do nothing.'

When this subject was introduced before the Board in Sept. 1828, Mr. Aikin *then* remarked, 'I do not recollect it.' Supposing Mr. A. should say hereafter that he *does* recollect it, who could be surprised? And must we believe the observation so often made, that *occasional* forgetfulness is a characteristic of the leading men of a certain class of the present day?

The following is from a highly respectable clergyman, and the remarks of Mr. A. were made to him in Dec. 1828, and were communicated to me soon after.

"Though he (Mr. Aikin) expressed an affection and respect for President Davis, as his former instructer, and admitted his high distinction and usefulness in Middlebury College, yet he intimated his belief that the College over which he now presides could not rise while he retained his present office. As a reason for this, he observed that Mr. Davis had preached but little in this region, and therefore was not *personally* and generally known; but that in Vermont he preached often, and on many public occasions, such as dedications and ordinations. S. D."

Now it is a fact that I never preached at a dedication in Vermont, and at but two ordinations. And notwithstanding all that has been recently said of my not preaching more in this region, as a cause of the languishing condition of the College, it is also a fact, that during my residence at Middlebury College I preached twenty times only in the county of Addison, in which the College is situated; and that after I had been President of Hamilton College the same period (eight years,) I had preached twenty-nine times in the county of Oneida.

of which we shall not have as many scholars this year as we should have had, granting the proposition had then been accepted, (viz. it was now so late in the season, that young men who were going to College had probably settled the question as to the College which they would enter, if they had not already entered,) and as I have taken pains to converse with many gentlemen on the subject, and found the experiment thought very doubtful, I feel myself compelled to say that I do not deem it my duty to unite in giving the security. Mr. Gridley had hoped the other gentlemen would do it without him: but they would not.

The President of the Board appeared deeply to lament, as did some others of the reformers, that this measure had failed. The General remarked, 'We have reached a solemn crisis. I am now prepared to adopt any measures in which the majority shall be agreed. If I cannot cordially unite with them, I shall deem it my duty to resign my seat; and I think it the duty of every member who cannot co-operate with them to do the same.' And he added here, or remarked subsequently, 'It is well for the Board to understand, that the inhabitants of the vicinity have taken the matter up and called a county meeting. We are undoubtedly accountable somewhere—I have ever supposed that there is some power above a Trustee.' (But why was the honorable gentleman afraid of being called to an account?)

The Board then elected *unanimously* Mr. J. H. Lathrop professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; and for the THIRD TIME. It was proposed to elect a professor of Divinity also. But after some conversation on the subject, it was deemed expedient to defer the appointment till the professorship should be endowed. It was remarked, 'that it was indispensable to the accomplish-

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It is generally, if not universally conceded, that our Colleges depend more on the patronage of the clergy than on any other class of men. Indeed, it is often remarked, that a College in the northern states cannot flourish without their patronage.

The fact is not to be controverted, that when I had resided at Hamilton College three years, I was more extensively known, personally, to the clergymen in the county of Oneida, and in the Synod of Geneva (then embracing all the Presbyterian churches west of the Presbytery of Oneida quite to Buffalo,) than I was to the clergy of Vermont the day on which I left it. During my residence at Middlebury, I attended once only the General Convention of the Congregational clergymen of that State. The winter after I came to this place, the Synod of Geneva commenced the enterprise of raising up a Theological Seminary within their borders. At the suggestion of the chairman of a numerous committee of said Synod, and in accordance with the wishes of my friends in this vicinity, I attended a meeting of the committee in June, which met for deliberation on the subject at Canandaigua. A few weeks subsequent, I met the Synod at Auburn. During the ensuing winter I met the same body at Geneva; and in the summer following I again met the Synod, or a large representation of them, at Auburn. Subsequent to that time I have repeatedly met the Boards of Commissioners, and of the Trustees, and many clergymen and other gentlemen, at the anniversaries of the seminary; and have also attended two special and numerous conventions at Auburn.

Yet Mr. Aikin thinks, it *seems*, (and doubtless many others are saying,) that the College cannot rise under me because I am not *personally* known. If my being unknown is the difficulty, why has the College ever risen under me!—

ment of this object that the members of the Board subscribe liberally themselves.' Gen. Kirkland expressed it as his opinion,

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Is it not remarkable that this complaint against me should be confined almost entirely to the county of Oneida? that my brethren who have been concerned in raising the cry that I am not known, &c., and striving to effect my removal, are most of them members with me of the same Presbytery? How satisfactory Mr. Aikin's manner of accounting for the decline of Hamilton College, and for its not being able to rise under its present head! Can a good cause require *such* measures for its support!

Mr. Gerrit Smith, in May, 1828, endeavored to convince me, in the presence of Mr. Keep, that it was my duty to resign my office, because a majority of the Board were determined not to support me; and he remarked, 'Messrs. Dwight, Frost and Coe have declared to me, they never will lift a hand to raise the College, so long as you are President of it.' I requested Mr. Smith to furnish me with a certificate of their declarations. He replied, 'I will not do that—those gentlemen will not deny it.' But Messrs. Frost and Coe declared before the Board, in September following, that they *never said so.* In January, 1828, I asked Mr. Frost whether he had ever heard any complaint of me, as an instructer, previous to commencement, 1826? He instantly replied, 'I never did—you stood high.' A few weeks after, Mr. Aikin answered to the same question, 'No—I am confident I never did.'

To reconcile the contradictions and discrepancies of Messrs. Lansing, Aikin, Frost, and Coe, in themselves, and among themselves, is a task for their own logic.

Dr. Norton and Mr. Eells, whose names are attached to the following certificate, have been members of the Board of Trustees of Hamilton College ever since my connexion with it, as has Mr. Frost also. Mr. Coe, during the whole of this period, has lived in New-Hartford, only six miles from the College. Dr. Weeks, during the same period, has resided about two years in the village of Clinton, and eight in Paris, five miles from it, and has prepared many young men for the College. And Mr. Monteith had been a professor in the Institution nearly seven years. Dr. Norton, and Messrs. Eells and Frost had been a standing committee of the Board, to attend the public examinations in the College, if I mistake not, from the time I came here, and at the date of the certificate the gentlemen were all Directors of the Western Education Society.

"We certify that Dr. Davis has this day asked Messrs. Frost, Coe and ourselves, whether we, or any of us, had heard from the students of College, any complaint of his method of instruction, or any dissatisfaction with it, previous to the commencement, 1826; or whether we had ever heard from any other quarter that the students were dissatisfied; and they and we all answered, that we had no recollection that we ever had.

A. S. NORTON,
WM. R. WEEKS,
JAMES EELLS,
JOHN MONTEITH.

Clinton, April 9th, 1828."

Messrs. Frost and Coe had retired before the certificate was written. Mr. Coe first answered that he had heard one of the scholars complain, who was graduated previous to that commencement. But it was soon ascertained that he was graduated at that time, and was the same young man who threw out his insinuations before the alumni. (See note 30.)

A few weeks subsequent to the above date, I requested Mr. Aikin, as he had already answered the question in the same manner, to put his signature to the certificate. He declined doing it, but was willing, he remarked, to unite with the Corporation in giving me such a certificate.

Since these gentlemen, all so favorably situated to know the estimation of the President in the judgment of his pupils, (some of them, as they remarked,

that unless we did well in the county of Oneida, we could expect to get nothing out of it.

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having been in habits of intimacy with many of the scholars,) had not heard from any quarter—even an individual of them, so far as they could recollect, of the young gentlemen in College being dissatisfied with the President's instruction, previous to commencement, August, 1826, is it not strange indeed, that the county of Oneida should be filled with rumors of their dissatisfaction in the summer of 1827? and that the institution should be believed, *on his account*, to be on the borders of ruin? What had the President done, or what had he left undone, to produce this change? Had he become less faithful? had he neglected his official duties? Does the professor in his letter to Mr. Smith, dated April, 1827 (see note 31,) suggest any thing of the kind, as the ground of his 'thorough conviction, that without a speedy remedy, the usefulness of the College must soon be at an end?' Mark the inconsistency of the professor. He says in the certificate above, that he did not recollect to have heard from any quarter, that the scholars were dissatisfied with the President's instruction, previous to August, 1826. (In May of this year, Mr. F. commenced his labors in the church in Clinton, and remained several weeks.) But what said he to Mr. S. in April, 1827, only eight months subsequent to commencement, August, 1826? 'The scholars say the instruction in the College the fourth year is greatly deficient. It has been with great pain I have heard this objection made by the senior classes for the *two or three years past*.' Objection to what?—Why to the instruction the fourth year, which he said depended entirely on the President. Is it possible he could say to Mr. S. that he had heard complaints of this deficiency made by class after class, year after year, and yet certify that he had heard of no dissatisfaction, till within eight months prior to his writing to Mr. S.? Could the scholars be so long complaining of great deficiency in the President's instruction, and yet express no dissatisfaction with it?

Mr. Frost acknowledged the President *stood high*, commencement, August, 1826. Mr. Aikin was confident he had heard of *no dissatisfaction* with his instruction prior to that period. Of what great neglect of duty had he been guilty—what crime had he committed since that time, which drove from the College its officers and scholars; and by which he had thrust himself so low that, in the judgment of Mr. Frost, Aikin, and others, the Institution never could flourish till he was removed from his office? What are we to think of all this? What does it mean? I ask again, what does it mean?

In view of the preceding facts (and many others of a similar kind are found in other parts of the narrative,) I see no way of avoiding the conclusion, painful as it is, that some of my brethren in the Board (and some who were out of it) had marked me for their prey, and were determined on hunting me down, with a zeal and pertinacity which would become the best of causes. Be it remembered, that during all these efforts and measures, both in the Board and out of it, not a single charge has been brought forward, no complaint presented, or even suggested, to my knowledge, against my moral character, (except the inquiry of Dr. Lansing, see note p. 81,) or of my want of faithfulness in the service, or of devotedness to the interests of the Institution.

True it is, that some seem to think they have lately discovered that I am not fit for my office, and never was fit for it; and have been saying, that *I am superannuated*. Be it so, that I am not fit for my office, and never was fit for it—can it be the duty of the Trustees of a College, because they have misjudged in their choice of a man to serve them, to break him down and destroy his character by management and misrepresentation? Be it so, that I *am* superannuated—is a man to be condemned because unable to resist the ravages of time; the immutable laws of God's providence? Is he, on this account, entitled to no sympathy, no compassion? Is he to be trampled upon as nothing-worth, whatever may have been his labors and services?

It was said in substance, by the President of the Board and several of the reformers, We must now be in earnest; we must

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But the *unfitness* alluded to, it has been suggested by some, is of a *local* character. It is remarked, that no man educated in New-England can succeed as a public man in this state, unless he comes here immediately after his education is completed: that the habits, manners, and modes of thinking in New-York are so different from what they are in New-England, that a man from the east cannot accommodate himself to the existing state of things here, and acquire popularity and influence, without undergoing a sort of transformation; which is impracticable, it is believed, after his habits and character are formed and settled. Gen. Kirkland has remarked, as I have been informed, that Dr. Davis, he did not doubt, would have done well at Yale. But we need a different kind of man, he thinks, for a President, from what they need in New-England. 'We must have a man of display, who will show himself abroad, and be making speeches and addresses on all public occasions. Our President (I have heard him say) ought to print three or four ordination sermons every year.'

But how was it as to the Johnsons at Columbia, and Edwards at Union? And had they not reached their meridian before they were called to those Colleges? During the first eight years of my presiding here, while Hamilton was steadily increasing in numbers and respectability, was any thing heard of the impracticability of my succeeding, because in education and manners an eastern man? And when was this profound discovery made, that a man from New-England, unless he leaves the land of his fathers soon after he has arrived at manhood, cannot succeed at the head of a College in this state? For it is a very remarkable fact that, since the establishment of Hamilton College in 1812, four New-England clergymen (excepting Dr. Spring, who came to New York in his youth), have been invited to its Presidency. What a surprising oversight! What a want of wisdom in the Board of Trustees, some of its present members being judges!

Does it not appear from the certificate of the Directors of the Education Society, and the concessions of Messrs. Frost and Aikin, that *my* want of *transformation* is quite a recent discovery? But unfortunately for those who would account for the decline of Hamilton College from such a cause, twenty-one years of my life, subsequent to the age of sixteen, have been spent in the state of New-York; and a great proportion of those years, at a period when a man's character is chiefly formed.

Gen. Kirkland, Messrs. Dwight, Frost, Aikin, and Coe, were all born in New-England, were educated there, and all came into the state of New-York when young men. Permit me to ask, then, (and I would do it with all due respect,) whether the conduct of these gentlemen, as Trustees of Hamilton College, furnishes an example of *that sort* of transformation which is necessary to an eastern man, before he can so accommodate himself to the *existing state of things* here, as to become popular and respected?

Although not so by birth, I would glory, were it proper, in being a New-England man in education and principles; but I have yet too good an opinion of my native state to believe that *such* a transformation of the habits and principles of a man, whose character has been formed in the land of the pilgrims, must be undergone, before he can possess the respect and confidence of the virtuous part of her citizens.

Give a College in this state—in this part of it at least—a New-England Corporation, (I mean, not of *transformed* New-England men, but of men, no matter where born or educated, entertaining New-England views and principles on the subject of education,) and the same government, *essentially*, may be maintained here, I have no doubt. I speak from experience. The principal difficulties which we have had to encounter on this subject, have not arisen from our young men or their parents; but from the Trustees themselves. (See notes 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 67, et passim.) And notwithstanding the hue and cry which has been raised against the College

now act in good faith. It was proposed that Mr. Lathrop should be expressly informed that they were now determined to support the College; that they were *serious* in their measures.

Mr. Maynard remarked, in reply, that the fact of Mr. Lathrop's being elected was sufficient evidence that the Board were in earnest; that he never gave his vote but in good faith. But it was argued, that 'Mr. Lathrop had been twice elected before; that they had been acting children's play long enough; and it was necessary Mr. L. should be assured by the Board that they were in earnest.' [71]

I requested to know of the Board, whether it was to be understood from their professions of willingness to support the College, that they were willing to support the President also? And it was presumed, I remarked, after all that had taken place, my request would not be thought unreasonable. [72]

It was then "Resolved, that the chair put to the several members of the Board the following question, and to request their answer, viz.: Are you willing to use your best exertions to support the College, Dr. Davis being President?" Mr. Frost, who was first interrogated, answered 'I am not willing. I would not say so, if he was the greatest man (or first man) in the U. States. I understand he has written a pamphlet against me, with Dr. Brown's name to it. And if he should publish against me, I should still be obliged to support him.' Mr. Aikin, next interrogated, replied, 'I answer as Mr. Frost has, (a matter of course,) I am not willing.' Mr. Gold, brother-in-law of Mr. Frost, answered, 'I am not willing?' Mr. Coe answered, 'I am willing to support the College; I have always thought it my duty to support it.' [73] All the other members present, viz.: Messrs. Norton, Brown, Kendrick, Lathrop, Eells, Maynard, Williams, Keep, Gridley, Hopkins, Bristoll, Bronson, and the President of the Board answered, 'I am willing.'

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by a majority of the Board, since the efforts for reform commenced in 1827, yet no one of them has complained, to my knowledge, that the Institution has declined for want of discipline, or that our discipline has been too strict.

[71] What is the import of such declarations and concessions? Does the man who is conscious that his word and actions have been uniformly characterized by truth and probity, feel such assurances *necessary*, to entitle him to credit? Whence, then, the origin of their fears? What an exposition of their motives and conduct!

[72] It had repeatedly, on former occasions, been asserted by some of the reformers, 'that every member of the Board, in all that he had said and done, had acted, no doubt, with regard to the best interests of the Institution.' And I had no evidence, notwithstanding their declarations 'that they must now act in good faith—that they must now support the College,' that the reformers would not think it their duty to endeavor to support it in the same manner they had long done, viz. by striving in every way possible to remove me from my office.

[73] Reserving to himself the right, as was much more evident from his looks and smiles than from his language, of still supporting the College, as he all along had endeavored to do, by exerting himself to the utmost to effect my removal.

Mr. Aikin, finding himself in a small minority, rose instantly and remarked in substance, and I believe verbatim, as follows, viz. :— 'Dr. Davis was my President—I have always had great respect for him—*I am willing to support him.*' What independence and consistency! Query—How much more was Mr. A. to be trusted for support now than before?

A committee was appointed to prepare an address to the public, setting forth the arrangement made by the Trustees, and their determination to support the Institution. It was remarked, We must let the public know that the College is not given up, as reported; and that the Board are adopting vigorous measures for sustaining it, &c. It was now late in the evening. In the morning, an able report was presented by the committee. They spoke highly, in the introduction of their report, of the local advantages of the Institution, and of the accommodations of the establishment; and they remarked that, 'Notwithstanding its present languishing condition, it has been an instrument of great good, and *has flourished* (or *has been flourishing*) *for several years.*' The precise language is not important: it was clearly implied that the Institution had flourished recently, or during my presidency.

It was moved to strike out the words "has flourished" or "has been flourishing," and to substitute the following, viz. "was flourishing"—clearly purporting, as was remarked by several of the friends of the College, that it flourished soon after its establishment, but had not flourished during the administration of its present head. Two or three gentlemen, who had exerted themselves for a *reform*, contended earnestly for the amendment—notwithstanding, when the question was put to them, the preceding evening, Are you willing to use your best exertions to support the College, Dr. Davis being its President? each of them answered unequivocally, *I am willing.*[74]

After much debate on the question of the amendment, Mr. Bronson declared, 'It is in vain for this Board to attempt to agree in any thing. Were we to stay here three weeks, a report could not be drafted in which we should be united.' Mr. Keep, the chairman of the committee, requested leave to withdraw their report, and remarked, that he deeply regretted the Board had not perceived before that they could agree in nothing. He expressed not a little surprise that a committee should be appointed for

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[74] When I entered on the duties of my office there were but a few more than fifty scholars here. Subsequent to the fourth year from that time there was no period, during a succession of five years, at which there were less than 100; and at one period they amounted to 110.—(See the tables, p. 112.) Yet these gentlemen, while they *professed* a willingness to use their *best exertions* to support the College with its President, were evidently unwilling it should be even *insinuated* to the public that it had flourished under his administration. The questions came home with great force to my mind, What does this mean? Is it not evidence of want of consistency in these gentlemen? I apprehended, after all, they would still be found in opposition to me. Had I not reason to apprehend it

such a service, and after being kept up till 2 o'clock in the morning, by the duty assigned them, that they should be told, when the report was presented, it was impossible to draft a report in which the Board could agree.

It was then proposed, provided we could say no more, that we should inform the public *officially* that Messrs. Lathrop and Axtell were appointed professors in the College, and that we had resolved to make forthwith a vigorous effort for the endowment of the Theological Professorship. The gentleman who made this proposition added, 'Could we also inform the public that we ourselves had subscribed liberally for this purpose, it would tend more to create confidence in our proceedings than any thing else which could be done by us.' Much had been said on the importance of the members themselves giving liberally towards this object; yet no one had said what he would give, or that he would give at all. [75]

Judging from all the circumstances before me, it was not to be doubted, as I thought, that some of the reformers were less sincere in their professions than they were desirous to appear to be. It seemed evident they had become alarmed at their past measures. It was not uncharitable to believe that their design *now* was to make a show of uniting with the friends of the College, and yet covertly to oppose them—hoping that, by this means,

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[75] Let it not be forgotten that the measures which all the members of the Board present, with the exception of four, *professed* themselves willing to adopt (I say four, because the evasive answer of Mr. Coe, and the vacillancy of Mr. Aikin, left no room for confidence in them,) were the very measures, in *all* respects, for which I earnestly contended at commencement, August, 1827 (at the time the committee proposed in their report to farm out the College to the officers,) when it was furnished with three professors—when we had 90 scholars on our catalogue—when $4000 dollars, without much effort, had recently been obtained towards the endowment of the Divinity Professorship, and no reasonable doubt remained of soon obtaining the amount proposed. If, in such circumstances, the reformers were *sincere* in saying, as some of them did, 'that the College could not be worse off'; that a degree from it was not worth accepting; that measures (such as now proposed) were no better than patchwork'—I say, if they were honest in such declarations *then*, with how much zeal and with what hopes of success could they be expected to unite with the friends of the College in these measures *now*, when all the professors had been driven from the College—when less than a dozen students were remaining—and when loud clamors were raised and reiterated, not against the faculty only, but against the Trustees also, on every side?—I ask again, if they were honest in their declarations and measures *then*, were there not strong reasons to doubt their cordiality *now*? Who could expect from them a *hearty*, a *vigorous* co-operation? Would Gen. Kirkland say that the College was better off *now* than it was *then*?

I had hoped, however, from the remarks which had fallen from the General, expressing apprehensions on account of the movements of the inhabitants in the vicinity, and from certain other circumstances, that some of the reformers would lend us a heartless co-operation—that at least they would not *counteract* our efforts—and that they were willing, at last, to see the Institution rise by the exertions of others, rather than risk the consequences of a public exposure of their measures.

the excitement against them, which their measures had created, would subside; that the President would be debarred from an appeal to the public; that the Institution would continue to languish and eventually expire in his hands, and that the blame of ruining it would rest, at last, where they had long been laboring to have it. From remarks and insinuations which had fallen from the members present, as well as from their former conduct, and from the previous course of others that were absent, viz. Messrs. Hart, Dwight and Lansing, I saw strong reason for apprehension that at least nine members,—more than one third of the Board,—would still remain in *secret*, should they not be found in open, opposition to our efforts. And the best that could be reasonably hoped from several others was a silent indifference. Under this view of the subject, I felt myself called upon by an imperious sense of duty to speak my sentiments with freedom. Who could consent, in silence, to be placed in such circumstances? Who, that is not lost to all feelings of self-respect, would not choose to take his stand and meet his fate?

My remarks, in substance, were as follows: Much has been said, Sir, in my presence, before this Board, of public sentiment being against your President; and I trust you will give me the credit of bearing it with a good degree of patience. But my own want of popularity is not the only obstacle to the success of our efforts. I know something of public sentiment in relation to this Board; and I presume, situated as I am, I shall be indulged in speaking of it with freedom. I have received many letters of condolence from friends abroad, some of them Presidents of our Eastern Colleges. Several of these friends remark, in substance, 'So far as I know the opinion of the public in regard to your difficulties, it is altogether against the Board.' Two gentlemen of great respectability, living within 20 miles of the College, said to me a few days after our meeting in January, and previous to receiving any information from me respecting our proceedings on that occasion, 'Let your Corporation now do what they will, they cannot succeed: they have forfeited the public confidence, and they never can regain it.' (I might have added, that the same opinion had been frequently expressed by respectable gentlemen in the county of Oneida.) But I believe, said I, notwithstanding, the state of the College is not desperate.

Provided the members of this Board will, with *unanimity*, *heartily* aid the faculty, and will subscribe, in proportion to their ability, *liberally* for the endowment of the Divinity Professorship, I firmly believe, gloomy as its prospects are, the Institution may yet be raised, and placed on a respectable footing. But while a considerable number of the Board are opposed to the faculty, and are determined not to lend them their co-operation, I see no ground for confidence in our efforts. For it will always be in the power of a few members of the Board, by repeatedly insinuating that the *faculty are unpopular, and that the College must run down in their hands*, to convince the public that such actually are its prospects, and, in this way, greatly to impede if not to defeat our exertions.

I am ready to serve you to the extent of my capacity. I can perform the appropriate duties of my office, teaching and governing, with as much vigilance and faithfulness, I believe, as ever. But as my services cannot, at present, be greatly needed in the College—since we can expect but few scholars, and no senior class who will call for my instruction, it will undoubtedly be thought my duty to spend much of my time abroad in soliciting aid for the Institution. I should be everywhere interrogated respecting our difficulties. I should wish to be able barely to say that our difficulties are all over, and that the Board have resolved unanimously, to act in harmony and with vigor. Unless I could say this, and this *only*, I should have no hopes of success. For if I had not confidence, myself, in our exertions, I could not expect to inspire others with confidence in them, nor could I attempt it; and nothing would be done.

I highly approve, Sir, the course recommended by the chair yesterday morning, as wise and proper. Were I a member of the Board only,—and not the President of your College also, I should deem it indispensably my duty to resign my seat, provided I could not heartily unite with the majority in their measures. If those gentlemen, who have declared that they are not willing to use their exertions to support the College with its present faculty, should consider it their duty to follow the advice of the President of the Board, and to suffer their seats to be occupied by others, who can cordially co-operate with us in our efforts, I should still have hopes of success. I remarked, subsequently, that provided those gentlemen would only assure us they would not do nor say any thing to obstruct our efforts, there would be ground for encouragement. But they made no reply. [76] The feelings of the reformers were *apparently* instantly changed. It seemed as if they were determined to pour a storm of vengeance upon me, from which, they presumed, I could make no retreat.

I was accused, in the strongest terms, by some of them, of dictating to the Board—of arrogating the right of saying to them who should hold seats with me and who not—of insulting the majority by insinuating that they could not sustain the College with its President because a few of the members were opposed to him. Gen. Kirkland remarked, 'This looks more like a ground of impeachment than any thing else I have seen.' [77] At the request of Mr. Gold the following question was put to each member of

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[76] Mr. Gold remarked to me privately, 'You had no right to ask it of men of such standing as Mr. Frost and Mr. Aikin.' But what is a man's standing aside from his conduct? and what was there in the conduct of those gentlemen,—judging from their uniform course for the last fifteen months,—which furnished the least ground to hope that they would do nothing to impede our exertions?

[77] I replied, that I claimed no right to say to them who should sit in the Board; that nothing but the extraordinary circumstances of the case would justify the suggestion which I had made. But when all the Board besides had in plain terms expressed a willingness to use their *best exertions* to sustain the College, and those gentlemen had declared they were not willing to

the Board, viz.—"Do you think it the duty of Messrs. Aikin, Frost, Coe, and Gold to resign their seats in this Board?" Each of them answered *no*.

On a motion of Mr. Gridley, a committee was appointed to confer with the President, for the purpose of ascertaining whether he would resign his office—if so, on what terms. I saw the trap, as I believed—not so designed, I presume, by Mr. G.; but by some one else, who requested him to set it for me. To be able to report that the President had refused to resign his office, when the Board were *unanimous* (although it could not be so said in relation to a question having any connexion with the main subject,) would have a bearing upon him which was perfectly obvious.

In much haste I gave the committee the following answer in writing, viz.—

"Gentlemen—I will resign my office, as President of Hamilton College, on the conditions following, viz.—

1. That the Board will inform the public that they have adopted certain measures (meaning not merely the resolutions which had been adopted by the votes of a majority of the Board, but other resolutions introduced, and proceedings already mentioned) which they are convinced were injurious to my character; and that they now deeply regret they were adopted.

2. That the Board will give me, in consideration of resigning my office, $4400."

My offer to resign, on these conditions, was dictated by prudence. It was foreseen, with moral certainty, that they would not be accepted. The first was unanimously rejected; and no vote, of course, taken on the second. My friends had done me no injury, and had nothing to acknowledge. And as to the reformers, although more than one or two of them had owned to me in private that the Board had *injured* me, yet it could not be expected of them that they would have the magnanimity to acknowledge it *publicly*.

It seems, the time had come, it was thought, for *another bold experiment*. It was declared 'Nothing short of some *strong measure* can now save the College. The President tells us he has no confidence in this Board, &c.' [78] A resolution was then

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do it, why should they still wish to retain their seats, to the exclusion of others who could unite with us; unless from the hope of baffling or retarding our efforts? Could the good of the Institution have been their motive? Were they apprehensive, if they left the Board, that all its wisdom would depart with them? Was there any thing in this act of mine unreasonable, or, indeed (all the circumstances considered,) disrespectful, as it respected either the gentlemen themselves or the Board? Could a man of Gen. Kirkland's discrimination believe that I had rendered myself liable to impeachment, by suggesting the expediency of those gentlemen acting in accordance with his advice? Is it criminal to wish to be freed from the enemies of one's own household?

[78] I replied that I was misapprehended; that I had not said I had no confidence in the Board: I acknowledged I *had* confidence in a great

brought forward for the appointment of a committee *to inquire whether the Board had power to remove the Rev. Henry Davis from his office.* This measure was intended to be the *chef-d'œuvre* of their *generalship.* Their object, it was obvious, was the same as in many previous measures, viz. to unman the President at once, and *crush* him on the spot.

After some conversation, a substitute was proposed and adopted, viz. *That the Board proceed to remove President Davis from his office.* The votes on the question being taken, four or five of the reformers voted for his removal. Mr. Williams remarked that the Board, he was fully satisfied, were not invested with power to remove the President of the College. Mr. Bronson expressed doubts. Gen. Kirkland acknowledged that he had not examined the question. [79]

The previous resolution was, at last, adopted. Dr. Brown was the only member who voted against it. Most of my friends voted for it, because, as Mr. Williams and others remarked, so

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portion of them; believed they were acting in good faith; and had barely said that I had no confidence in our efforts, so long as a considerable number would not unite with us, and could by their suggestions and insinuations paralyze all our measures. But granting that I *had* said I had no confidence in the Board, after the treatment which I had received from a majority of them —after resolution upon resolution had been brought forward that the College could not flourish in my hands—after it had been declared on the floor, in my presence, that I was not the man for them—after being again and again pointedly insulted, by being requested to retire, and suffered day after day to be absent from their deliberations—after reducing my salary by a deliberate vote of the majority, in its effect on my official character, where the real motives and circumstances were not known, no better than assassination—and after Mr. Bronson (now Attorney Gen. of the State,) had declared, 'It is in vain for this Board to think of agreeing in any thing;' grant, that with all these facts (and many others already related) before me, I *had* said I had no confidence in the Board; what would have been my crime? Will any man say that I should have been wanting in charity or respect for them *as a body?*

Why then did Gen. K. and others pounce upon me with the ferocity of the tiger? Why did they exult, as if confident I should be constrained at last to yield myself up as their prey? What stronger evidence could they have given of want of sincerity in assenting to the measure which had been proposed?—and that their embarrassed condition had imposed upon them a necessity of *seeming* to assent to it in good faith?

[79] Is it not strange that the General, so eminent as he had long been as a jurist, should be ignorant on such a point?—that he should have been sixteen years a member of the Corporation, without ascertaining, from the Charter or other means, his rights and powers (and even duties, it would seem) as such? That while he had been for so long a time striving with others to effect the resignation of the President, as in his view essential (if honest in his declarations) to the prosperity, indeed to the existence of the Institution, he had not even taken the pains to inquire whether the Board were invested with power to remove him from his office?

Mark the General's declaration, Jan. 1828 (see Nar. p. 68)—'*We can't get rid of our President—when our money is gone, we can send off our professors; but he can claim his house and salary, and we can't help ourselves,*' &c. &c. Does it not seem that the General must even *then* have been convinced by *examination*, or otherwise, that it was not in the power of the Board to remove the President?

much had been said on the question they wished to have it finally settled. Messrs. Maynard, Williams, Bronson, and Kirkland were appointed a committee of inquiry; and the Board agreed to hold an adjourned meeting in one week, for the purpose of receiving their report.

ADJOURNED MEETING, *September* 24, 1828.

Present, sixteen members, viz.—Messrs. Kirkland, Lothrop, Maynard, Bronson, Gold, Norton, Kendrick, Williams, Bristoll, Aikin, Eells, Frost, Coe, Dwight, Hopkins, Davis.

The report of the committee being called for, the chairman remarked, that in the opinion of the committee, *it was inexpedient to make a report.* Soon after I arose (in consequence of being asked what I thought ought to be done in the existing circumstances,) and addressed the Board precisely, or nearly, in the words following, viz. I was induced, Mr. President, to express myself, at your last meeting, in the unexpected manner in which I did, by reason of certain occurrences totally unlooked for by me, and by which I was deeply affected. (The amendment of the report, proposed and advocated by some of the reformers, and the remark of Mr. Bronson, that *it was impossible for the Board to agree in any thing.*) What those occurrences were, I deem it unwise now to state. [80] I had intended to make a few remarks, prior to our adjournment, touching my peculiar situation, and what I hoped might be expected from the Board. My remarks, however, would have been of a different character, but for the occurrences alluded to: and I regret that I did not remain silent till the Board had had an opportunity of proving the sincerity of their profession by subscribing for the endowment of the Professorship of Divinity.

But the Institution, Sir, may yet be saved by the united and spirited exertions of the Trustees and faculty. If we cannot consent to adopt this course, your College must be brought to desolation. The consequence is inevitable. And shall we suffer it to expire in our hands? Why can we not unite in an effort for its salvation? What has taken place that should prevent it?

I am an imperfect man—you, Sir, are an imperfect man—we are all imperfect men. Whatever you may have said or done, which I regard as unkind and unjust towards me, I can cheerfully forgive you, if I know my own heart: I am no Christian, if I can-

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[80] I had said nothing at the former meeting in allusion to the gentlemen who proposed and advocated the amendment of the report of the Committee: nor to Mr. Bronson's declaration as to the want of harmony in the Board. No other members had manifested a more inveterate spirit of opposition to me than Messrs. Frost, Aikin and Coe; and Mr. Gold, by his answer, had placed himself exactly in a class with these gentlemen.

It was obvious, if they resigned their seats, that all who had been in the opposition would constitute but a minority; that the vacancies could be

not. And if you cannot forgive me, wherein you may think I have injured you, you are not Christians. Are you prepared for the consequences of persisting in this course of opposition? Are you willing that all our proceedings should be laid bare before the public? If you persist in this course, there will be no alternative. Such an exposure would be a reproach to this Board—a reproach to the cause of Christ. If we are wise, we shall overlook the things that are past, and look only at those that are before. [81]

Mr. Coe arose, and made an allusion to some of our past proceedings. The President of the Board replied to him, that *he thought it better to follow the suggestion of the President of the College.* [82]

Nothing occurred subsequently to produce excitement. No one objected to pursuing the course prescribed. The secretary was directed to inform Mr. Lathrop that the Board were determined to sustain the College, and that he might rely on their cor-

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filled with men who were friendly to the College, and that its supporters would be found a decided and strong majority.

[81] Messrs. Maynard, Bronson, and Gold now threw their resignations on the table and retired. Mr. Smith resigned immediately after commencement; and Mr. Gridley a few weeks subsequent to the present meeting.

Messrs. Maynard and Bronson took their seats in the Board (soon after the introduction of the measures for a *reform*) at the adjourned meeting in Sept. 1827; and Mr. Gold at the meeting in May, 1828.

Had these gentlemen been called to the aid of the College with full and correct knowledge of its *actual* situation, and of the causes of its embarrassment, I think too highly of their judgment and integrity not to believe they would have acted a part widely different. But Utica, the place of their residence, had for some time previous resounded with complaints against the College and its officers, and with predictions of its speedy downfall, without the immediate application of some wonder-working remedy. It was natural, situated as they were, that they should enter into the views of the members in Utica.—As soon as admitted to our councils, they found the Board distracted in their opinions as to measures, and a want of harmony and confidence between a portion of the Board and the faculty: and they undoubtedly thought, as Mr. Bronson has since acknowledged to me, that the removal of the faculty was the first and an essential step towards delivering the Institution from its embarrassments. Neither of these gentlemen, I am persuaded, entertained towards the President, *as a man*, the least hostility. Their interests and his had never interfered. That they should be his *personal* enemies seems morally impossible. Certain I am that he never was theirs. But when they were convinced that all further opposition to him and to the minority would tend but to sink the Institution in inextricable ruin, they voluntarily retired from their seats, as was their duty, and were willing to give it up to the management of those who could not be brought to adopt *conscientiously* their views and measures. Mr. Bronson has recently expressed to me much satisfaction in the prospect of the College rising again. And I doubt not Messrs. Maynard and Gold feel the same satisfaction in it.

[82] The President of the Board had remarked to me in conversation, at the preceding meeting, soon after my suggestions which produced so much excitement (and his remarks were accompanied by a profusion of tears,) 'that he deeply regretted the course I had taken; that he had begun to hope our difficulties were almost over; and that he had drawn up a subscription for the Professorship of Divinity, with an intention of putting his own name to it.'

He remarked to Dr. Norton, as the Dr. himself informed me, that he had

dial co-operation; and the President of the College was requested to write to Mr. Axtell. A committee was appointed to circulate a subscription for the Divinity Professorship. Gen. Kirkland produced a paper, at the request of one of the members, drawn up by himself for this purpose, previous to or at the last meeting of the Board, and which he had said it was his intention to subscribe.

The expediency of the members of the Board subscribing previous to their adjournment was suggested; but the General replied, *We had better think of it a little.* The Board then adjourned sine die. [83]

I soon saw strong reasons for apprehension that some, at least, of the principal reformers were not so much in earnest as their assenting to the course recommended might warrant one in expecting. And I ascertained that many of the friends of the College in the Board believed the reformers had *seemed* to approve and countenance the measure proposed with the hope of calming the public mind, and of preventing an application to the Regents.

The Gen. remarked, a few days subsequent to the adjournment, that he would give $200 towards the endowment of the Divinity Professorship. But when the paper drawn up by the committee was presented to him, more than six weeks after (a sufficient time,

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intended to make a subscription which would have been considered *liberal* for a man in his circumstances. It was currently reported that he would have subscribed $1000, and that other reformers intended to subscribe liberally. It was this information which led me to regret that I had deprived them of an opportunity of testing their sincerity by evidence more substantial than words. And the same consideration had a powerful influence in inducing me to propose the above-mentioned course. If the reformers had *really* intended, as it was said they had declared, to subscribe liberally for the professorship, the Institution, I believed, might yet be saved: if not sincere in their declaration, I wished to place their *insincerity* beyond all doubt. But if then willing to contribute to the object out of a sincere regard to the good of the College, was it not reasonable to suppose they were *still* willing to do it? If, after all the insult and abuse they had heaped upon me, I had the magnanimity to forgive them, must they not have regarded it as dishonorable to them as Christians, or as gentlemen, even to have been *suspected* of not having magnanimity enough to forgive me?

[83] For what reason did the General 'wish to think of it a little?' Had he not already thought of it? Had he not drawn up conditions for subscription himself, and formed his purpose, previous to the last meeting of the Board, as he had remarked, to subscribe liberally? Had any thing taken place to render the object less desirable? Had the salvation of the College become less important? If ready to subscribe before, as he said, and to subscribe *liberally*, why, it may be asked, was he not as ready to subscribe now, and with the same liberality? His wish for delay could not but give rise to unpleasant suspicions.

The following article appeared in a Utica Gazette, immediately after the adjournment of the Board.

"The public are informed that the Trustees of Hamilton College, at a late meeting, have filled the vacancies in the Professorships of Mathematics and Nat. Philosophy, and of the Languages, by the appointment of gentlemen whose talents and qualifications entitle them to their entire confidence, and that they have made provision for the immediate instruction of the students of the College at the commencement of the collegiate year in October, and until the professors elect shall enter upon their official duties. They have

it was supposed, for him *to think of it a little*) he subscribed $150 only; $50 less, he said, than he had intended to subscribe, because the amount to be raised—$15,000, as was settled by the committee —was not large enough, in his view, to answer the purpose.

The secretary of the Board, who had formed his purpose, as he informed me to give $100, subscribed but $50; and *because* Gen. Kirkland had reduced *his* sum. Another gentleman in Utica, recently elected a member of the Board, subscribed $50 also. No other subscriptions had yet been obtained. The subject had been presented to several respectable gentlemen in the county—not connected with the Board, but feeling a deep interest in the College, who declared to me that they would give nothing to the Institution till the Trustees themselves had convinced them by their *own liberal* subscriptions they were in earnest: that they should *then* be ready to give, and to give liberally. Similar views and feelings were expressed by gentlemen out of the county of Oneida.

With a subscription headed with sums like these, in such circumstances, the committee saw little encouragement to persevere. It was thought advisable to request a meeting of some of the most respectable gentlemen of Clinton, for the purpose of counsel on the subject. Fifteen gentlemen assembled. Deep interest was manifested, and I doubt not felt, for the Institution; and a willingness to contribute towards its support, provided there was a prospect of success.

According to the request of the committee, they expressed their views and feelings without reserve. It was the general opinion of the gentlemen present, that, provided the Corporation would unite cordially with the faculty, the Institution might soon be built up, and raised to its former respectable standing; but it was fully believed by those gentlemen that there was no ground to hope for their thus uniting with the faculty.

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also taken measures, which they trust will be *zealously* pursued, for the endowment of the lately established Professorship of Divinity.

"By order of the Board,

"*Sept.* 24*th*, 1828." "J. H. Lothrop, *Clerk.*

Now what encouragement could the public take, in such circumstances, from an *official* communication like the above? Who could believe that the Board even *wished* that the measures, which it was *trusted* would be *zealously* pursued, might be *successfully* pursued also?

Mr. Lothrop read me an article, subsequently, which he had written for publication; according, as he remarked, more fully with the wishes expressed by several members at the meeting; viz.—'That the Board were determined to do all in their power to place the College on a respectable footing; that they were adopting vigorous measures for this purpose, &c. &c.' But *some* of the members in Utica, to whom it was shown, objected to it, as he informed me, and thought it best to publish nothing but the *appointments*. But why object to informing the public (especially as many of the Board desired it) that they were adopting vigorous measures, if willing to adopt them, and to save the College, as they had professed to be? Why object to disclosing the names of the gentlemen elected? contrary to all usage. Were they afraid, if their names were disclosed to the public, that *more* confidence would be reposed in these gentlemen by the public than they (the reformers) wished?

Most of the oldest and most respectable of them believed that nothing could be done till there was a change in the Corporation. Three of them (all *new measure men*, and the only men of that character present) expressed it as their opinion, that the Institution could not rise without a change in the faculty. Had the gentlemen present been convinced that it was the settled purpose of the Board to use their united and vigorous exertions in aiding the faculty, $2000, I have no doubt, would have been obtained on the spot. Two gentlemen, I know, would have given $500 each. The conditions of the subscription were read, and an invitation given to put their names to it; but such were the circumstances that not a cent was subscribed. [84]

I now came to the conclusion that all further effort respecting this object was useless; and was more firmly convinced, if possible, than ever, that the Institution never could be restored to the

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[84] One of the *new measure* men, recently a member of the Board, remarked, 'that he considered the Corporation altogether in the wrong; that the blame of prostrating the College belonged chiefly to them. But the President's situation,' he said, 'was his misfortune: it could not be helped, and it was his duty to resign.' Another, to prove the correctness of his opinion, remarked, 'that a gentleman who had just returned from the north reported, that the scholars would not come to this College from two Academies in that region, which were specified, *because President Davis was here.*' But a few weeks previous, however, I had received a letter from the Principal of one of them, in which he says, "Be assured, Sir, that I have felt a deep sympathy during your period of *unnatural* darkness. I remember Ham. Coll. with much affection: I regard that Institution as my Alma Mater; and permit me to say that I have long had a full and *unshaken* confidence in your qualifications to take proper care of her. It would have given me great pleasure to send two good students from this Academy to your College. Common report said H. C. is down. If, next autumn, we have any fit candidates for College, we shall not, Sir, forget you."

The Principal of the other Academy, having heard of the report in circulation, kindly furnished me with the following communication, viz. "It is not true, to my knowledge, that the pupils of my Academy will not go to Ham. Coll. because Dr. Davis is there. The objection that they or other young men have made to going to this Institution is, want of harmony in the Corporation. Alas, too often are our enemies of our own household." Both of these gentlemen are alumni of this College, and have fitted a great number of young men for entering it.

The third gentleman who believed the College could not flourish without a change in the faculty, informed the meeting that he heard Mr. Maynard (late a member of the Board) declare, in the presence of several gentlemen, a few days previous, in a certain office in Utica, that 'the College was flourishing when Dr. Davis came here; that it had run down in his hands, and never could rise while he was connected with it.' Now it is a very remarkable fact, as can be proved by two as credible witnesses as there are in the county of Oneida, that Mr. Maynard remarked, within two weeks from that time, that *the College had been talked down.** The above facts are introduced (and a multitude of a similar character might be mentioned) to show how desirous a *certain* class of the community are to crush the President of Hamilton College, and that they are not over-scrupulous as to the means.

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* Who can doubt the correctness of this remark; or that *some* of the Trustees have been the principal talkers? (See especially notes 8, 45, 70.) Show me the College, if you can, which could not be ruined by such means.

confidence and patronage of the public, without a radical change in the Board itself. It was evident that otherwise it must continue to languish, and would finally expire.

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD, *March* 18, 1829.

Present, seventeen members, viz.—Gen. Kirkland, Drs. Norton, Kendrick, Yates, and Lansing; Rev. Messrs. Eells, Frost, Coe, Keep and Aikin; J. H. Lothrop, J. J. Knox, O. Williams, E. Goodrich, G. Bristoll, S. Hopkins, Esqrs., and the President. Dr. Yates and Mr. Goodrich took their seats for the first time.

The meeting was constitutionally called, in consequence of a communication from the Regents, which was as follows, viz.

"At a meeting of the Regents of the University, held pursuant to adjournment in the senate chamber, Feb. 3d, 1829—

"A communication [85] from John Lay, Jesse Curtis, Josiah

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[85] The following is the communication alluded to, viz.—
To the Hon. the Regents of the University of the State of New-York:

"The petition of the undersigned, a committee appointed by the citizens of the county of Oneida, at a meeting held in Clinton, on the 12th day of September last, pursuant to public notice, *respectfully showeth*—

"That Hamilton College, in the county of Oneida, was incorporated in the year 1812. That this act of incorporation was granted on condition that the inhabitants who were interested in having an Institution of this character located in this county should furnish funds to the amount of $50,000. By great exertions, funds to this amount were obtained. Funds also, to a considerable amount, have been received from the state. The College edifices have been located in Clinton, in the heart of one of the most fertile and healthy places in the western section of this state, and it is thought that a more delightful and suitable site could not have been selected in the state of New-York for a literary Institution. A competent faculty were appointed, and it soon became a very popular and highly convenient and useful Institution.

"There was yearly an increase of students, and the Trustees added buildings for their accommodation, equal to its increasing popularity and prosperity.

"Dr. Henry Davis, the President, a gentleman of high literary attainments, and acknowledged abilities in College government and discipline, assumed the duties of his responsible office under the most favorable auspices. And the College under his administration, for several years, succeeded beyond the expectation of its most sanguine friends.

"While your petitioners take into consideration that this Institution once flourished, that the number of its students exceeded one hundred, that the expectation of its friends was fully realized, and that every indication in relation to it was calculated to produce a conviction that it would increase in importance with the increase of wealth and population of the surrounding country, it gives them deep and sincere regret to say, that they are obliged, from a sense of duty, to represent to your Hon. Body, that their expectations in regard to the future prosperity of the College have been suddenly disappointed, and their anticipations with respect to its subsequent usefulness, in their apprehension, cannot be realized, inasmuch as the students are now reduced to *nine*; leaving no probability that there will soon be many additions to this number.

"Nearly $150,000 have been expended in the erection of buildings, and in

Bacon and others, representing themselves to be a committee appointed by citizens of the county of Oneida, setting forth the present declining state and condition of Hamilton College, and requesting the Regents to ascertain the causes which have produced the decline, and to adopt such measures to restore the College to its former state as to them should appear suitable and proper, was read, and after some time spent thereon, it was ordered, that in as much as the Trustees of said College did not make any report to the Regents at their last annual session, the secretary be directed to inform them of their default, and to call on them for a report of the present state and condition of their College, and of the causes, if any, which have produced a decline in its affairs.

A true copy from the minutes of the Regents.

GIDEON HAWLEY, *Secretary.*"

To the above call from the Regents the Board of Trustees returned the following answer, viz:

"The usual annual report of the state and condition of the College having been made by the Chairman and Clerk of the Board, on the 23d day of Feb. last—

"*Resolved,* without expressing an opinion upon the powers of the Board of Regents to require of the Trustees to report the causes of the decline of the affairs of the College, that in their opinion it would be inexpedient to attempt to state the causes of such decline and would lead to no practical good, but that the Trustees will be happy to receive a visit from the Board of Regents, or a committee of the same, whenever it shall suit their convenience or pleasure."

Gen. Kirkland, soon after the above resolution was adopted, left the chair and addressed the Board for some time. He spoke of the disagreement, and of its consequences, between the *captain*

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improvements in connexion with the College. Should it be suffered to decline until it sinks into oblivion, the loss of property not only must be immense, but the loss to this community in other respects, will be paramount to any pecuniary considerations.

"With these preliminary remarks, your petitioners humbly request of the Regents to ascertain the causes which have produced this unfortunate state of things, and adopt such measures to resuscitate this Institution, as in your wisdom may seem judicious. As in duty bound they will ever pray.

"*Clinton, Oneida County, 13th January,* 1829.

JOHN LAY,
JESSE CURTISS,
JOSIAH BACON.
GOULD BENEDICT,
THOMAS DEAN,
WINTHROP H. CHANDLER,
JOSHUA RANDALL,
LEM. LEE CHESTER,
RICHARD W. SANGER,
ISAAC MILLER,
REUBEN TOWER."

and the *crew*, as he was pleased to call us ;[86] of there being, in his view, no prospect, situated as we were, of saving the ship ;—(then dropping his figure) of the importance of the President of a College being popular ; of the Institution depending chiefly upon his reputation ; of parents enquiring, when about to send their sons to a College, not who the Corporation are, but who are the faculty ; of the Board having had meeting after meeting, in quick succession, for the last eighteen months ; of their having appointed professors and made great exertions, without experiencing any increase of the number of scholars.[87] Our President, said the General, is complaining of the Board, that we have made ourselves unpopular by our measures, that the public have lost their confidence in us, (or in a part of us) and some of the Board are also complaining of him. *Whenever the President of a College*, added the General, *has become unpopular, no matter from what cause, let it be what it may, it makes no difference, he ought to resign his office.*[88] But since our President will not do it, I deem it

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[86] Supposing the General had said, the crew itself were at variance : that part were for supporting the captain, and endeavoring to keep the ship under way ; and part following the champion of the crew, in striving to heave her to, for the purpose of getting the captain overboard—would he not have hit the case more exactly ?

[87] But not a word dropped from the Hon. gentleman, as to their driving off the professors by their reports and resolutions, and their leaving the Institution, term after term, without proper officers—nothing respecting gentlemen, when appointed, declining their appointments, in consequence of the distracted state of the Board—nothing respecting the scholars having, almost to a man, left us, by reason of their extraordinary proceedings—nothing respecting the opinion which the reformers had freely expressed and circulated, and which some of them, at least, were, with much pains, circulating still, that the College never could prosper without a change as to its President.

The General wished the President to mention those measures and proceedings of the Board which he thought had been injurious to the College. His object was instantly perceived. I replied, 'those measures and proceedings have already been specified on this floor, and I see no good end to be answered by a repetition of them.'

[88] May not the President of a College, as well as other men, become unpopular in consequence of a conscientious and faithful performance of his official duties ?—and must he offer up his good name a victim on the altar of his own fidelity ?

From prejudice, or malice, or from motives of selfishness, or personal promotion, (and men enough there are in this wicked world, not above such motives,) may not individuals, or an individual, of address and management, spread reports far and wide, deeply affecting his reputation as a scholar, or his moral and christian character, without danger of detection ?

And even among the *Corporation* of a College, is it not possible that men may *sometimes* be found, who may feel sufficiently the power of impure motives to attempt by unfair means to break down their President ? Is it not of the things possible, that there may be *evidence* of their attempting this, from ambition, prejudice, or from mercenary views ? And shall he yield to their attempts, without resistance ? Does his duty to himself or to the public demand it of him ? Must he voluntarily retire from his place, and acknowledge their calumnies true ? Must he, by his own hand, stamp his character with the seal of infamy ? Surely he must, the Gen. being judge. Establish the General's maxim, then, and who would be safe in such an office, be his talents and worth what they may ? Who would trust his reputation in the hands

my duty to resign my seat in this Board; and I think several others, perhaps six or eight, had better do the same. Should our places be filled with men, in whose judgment he will have confidence, it may be that he will be induced to leave the College.—The situation of the President is different from ours; his reputation as a scholar, &c. is at stake; but we can resign our seats without much sacrifice. The General then threw his resignation on the table. Dr. Norton believed that a part of the Board had lost the confidence of the public, in a good degree; and he approved of the course recommended by Mr. Kirkland.

Dr. Lansing appeared greatly surprised at the expression of such an opinion. He remarked that 'he had heard of no complaint against the Board, & had never understood before that their measures had not met with the entire approbation of the public.[89] I

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of the Trustees of a College, who should feel themselves under no obligation, in *any* circumstances, to protect and defend it; but should even claim the right of sacrificing it? For, no matter, in the view of the General, what the circumstances—no matter who his calumniators—what their motives—what their intrigue—what their misrepresentation;—if they have only rendered him unpopular, it is *enough*. Be the effect upon his reputation and usefulness what it may—be the effect upon the present or future condition of the College what it may—be his talents and past services what they may;—these things, in the opinion of the General, make no difference. He must resign: there is no alternative for him.* How the General's maxim is to be defended, on the principles of morality, or on the ground of sound discretion, or even of *expediency*, I know not. But this I know,—that no College, only let it be known that its Trustees had adopted it, could long exist.

[89] Had Dr. L. forgotten that he said to me at the January meeting, 1828, 'The Board have abused you: had I been present I should have opposed them'? (alluding in particular, as I supposed, to their reducing my salary in September;) and that he remarked to a gentleman in Utica, on the day following the meeting in January, 'I am surprised to find so much radicalism in the Board'? Does Dr. L. regard his own opinions as nothing? And has he forgotten, that in a conversation with me, at Whitesboro', so recently as Nov. last, he denied that he had ever voted against filling the vacant professorships? (see vote on resolution, page 80;) and that he declared, at the same interview, 'I have always been on your side: I have done all I could to support you'? Whence, then, his surprise at learning that any of the measures of the Board, (i. e. of the majority, my opposers,) which, if his declaration be true, he himself must have disapproved and opposed, were unpopular?—I leave the subject, hoping it will be less painful to the reader than it is to myself.

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* If any thing were still wanted, to expose the design of the measures of the reformers, should we not find it here? Is it not placed beyond doubt, by the General's own maxim, that he and his followers expected with certainty the resignation of the President, as soon as it should be believed that public opinion was against him, (in consequence of it being rumored it was so,) although no specific facts should be stated as the ground of it? (See remark of Mr. Aikin, note 70—'But, *in some way or other*, public sentiment is so much against him he can do nothing.') Is it not evident they expected that, in this way, the removal of the President would be effected, while the authors of it would be screened from censure, and he *alone* be the sufferer?—Hence their perseverance in the work. Disappointed in their first effort, they were induced to make the second, &c. till they were so far committed that they could not retreat with *honor*; and it was thought necessary, in order to save themselves, to hew down the President, at all hazards to the College.

cannot in conscience, he added, resign my seat in this Board ;—God in his providence has called me here, and I know not whether my place would be occupied by a worse or better man than myself.[90] It belongs to us to discharge the duties committed to us, and I hope no man will desert the post assigned him. This Institution is of immense importance to the interests of the Church. We are looking at it from the West with deep solicitude. (Dr. L. at this time was a resident in Auburn.) Let us do our duty, and God, in the overturnings of his providence, will soon appear for our relief. Let us lie-to under bare poles, and we shall by and by have a smooth sea and gentle breezes, and be safely wafted into a snug port.'[91]

Dr. Norton wished to know in what way the gentleman expected relief: but he made no reply.

The President of the College asked, Does Dr. Lansing suppose that God is going to work miracles for us? that the ship will be carried into port without exertions on our part? Is it his object *to lie-to under bare poles* till the *captain*, or *crew*, shall be swept overboard? Dr. L. was still silent.

General Kirkland remarked, after much had been said, that if there was any prospect of doing *good* he was willing to *retain* his seat; and *took back his resignation.*

Dr. Kendrick, in reference to the observations which had fallen from Gen. Kirkland, acknowledged that the reputation of a College depends much on the character of the President; but thought, when there was a change in the public sentiment unfavorable to him, it was the duty of the Trustees to search for the causes of it: they might *possibly* be found near home. He had long been acquainted, he remarked, with the President of Hamilton College; had been favorably situated to know his standing in the public estimation, (see note 35) and in the view of many young men educated here, and of some educated partly at this, and partly at other Colleges; and was greatly surprised soon after he came into the Board [92] to find some of the members complaining of his want of popularity; of his not being known; and he added, that he never understood till he learned it from the Trustees themselves, that his standing in the opinion of the public was not as good as it ever had been.

The character of the President of a College, said the Dr. is very much in the hands of the Corporation. The opinion of the public respecting him is formed in a great degree from theirs. Why

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[90] Has Dr. L. always acted on this principle? Has he never resigned a place to which he believed he had been called in the *providence of God*, without previously ascertaining that it would be occupied by a *better* man than himself?

[91] A ship *lying to, under bare poles!* How *admirably* adapted the figure to express the condition in which this skilful navigator would have placed the College! But what said Dr. L. to me in Nov. 1829?—(see note 70,)—'*I have done all I could to support you*'!

[92] Dr. K. had never met with the Board but once previous to commencement, 1827, at which time the report was presented, in which it was proposed to farm out the College to the faculty.

is it, he asked, that we, and multitudes of others entertain high respect for many men in our country, whom we and they never saw? Is it not because those who know them, and in whose judgment we confide, are in the habit of speaking well of them? The Trustees of a College, it is well understood, are acquainted with their faculty, and are supposed to be competent and impartial judges. Let them, then, suggest doubts as to the qualifications of their President; let them, when interrogated on the subject, reply that they don't know; let them say that the College, from some cause or other, does not flourish, or only remain silent—and who does not foresee the effect upon his reputation?

It is my opinion, added the Dr. that the character of our President has been *much* injured by the conduct of some of the members of this Board.

The Dr. had remarked, at an adjourned meeting in Sept. 1828, that it was not to be denied that the tide of public opinion, from some cause or other, was setting against the President in the county of Oneida; but that out of the county, he was persuaded, it was as much in his favor as it had ever been.

SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD, *May*, 1829.

Present, thirteen members, viz.—Gen. Kirkland, Drs. Norton, Yates and Kendrick, O. Williams, E. Goodrich, J.J. Knox, S. Hopkins and G. Bristoll, Esqrs. Rev. J. Eells, N. Coe, J. Frost, and the President.

Hon. John B. Yates, Nicholas P. Randall, James O. Morse, Josiah Bacon, Esqrs. and the Rev. John Smith, were appointed members of the Board of Trustees; and Mr. Simeon North, a tutor in Yale College, was appointed professor of the Languages.

Dr. Brown having removed to Boston, a communication was received from him, announcing the resignation of his seat as a Trustee of the College; and, previous to the adjournment, Mr. Eells also presented his resignation.[93]

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[93] When the Board convened, at the hour appointed, 10 o'clock, but twelve members were present. One was still wanted to constitute a quorum for business. It was known previously, that several members were abroad, and not to be expected; and that there were five vacant seats in the Board. It would *seem*, therefore, (considering the peculiar state of the College,) that the members who were in its vicinity must have considered it incumbent on them to make extraordinary exertions to attend. About 12 o'clock, it was suggested by Dr. Yates as expedient to send for Mr. Aikin, since nothing could be done without another member. Mr. Coe replied to the suggestion, 'that Mr. Aikin remarked to him a few days before, that he thought he should not attend the meeting.'* Gen. Kirkland was the only member present from Utica, excepting Mr. Goodrich; who, although laboring under the ague and fever, and was expected by no one, felt the urgency of the occasion such, that he attended notwithstanding.

* The object of Mr. Coe's remark was, no doubt, to make it appear *useless* to *send* for Mr. A. It was obviously the *secret* wish of the reformers to send for no one; but they durst not directly oppose it.

The gentlemen elected members of the Board in May, viz.—Hon. J. B. Yates, N. P. Randall, J. O. Morse, J. Bacon, Esqrs. and Rev. J. Smith, all took their seats. Present, also, Drs. Norton, Yates, Kendrick, Lansing, E. Goodrich, J. J. Knox, O. Williams, G. Bristoll, S. Hopkins, Esqrs., Rev. N. Coe, J. Keep, S. C. Aikin, and the President—in the whole, eighteen members.

Gen. John Ledyard and the Rev. John F. Schermerhorn were elected to seats recently vacated by the decease of John H. Lothrop, Esq. and the resignation of Rev. Henry Dwight. A professorship of Rhetoric and Belleslettres was established, and a committee appointed to make enquiries for a man of suitable qualifications for the office. A degree of harmony and good feeling prevailed in our deliberations and results, which had long since ceased to be witnessed, and was regarded as a sure harbinger of better times to the Institution.

After some conversation, the President of the Board remarked, that he thought it best for him to write to Messrs. Aikin and Hart. It was known that they were both in Utica. A messenger was accordingly despatched with letters to these gentlemen. But neither of them appeared, and no answer was received from them.

About one hour after the departure of the express, Gen. Knox unexpectedly arrived from New York, where he had been on business. The effect of his arrival on the feelings of the reformers could not be concealed. As there was now a quorum present, and a strong majority friends of the College, we were able to fill all the vacancies with men of our own choice. Chagrin and despair (some have said anger also) were depicted in the countenances of the reformers, as they saw the power departing from them, without a possibility of preventing it.

As only five of the reformers were present, and as there would not have been a quorum, had a single friend of the College in the Board been absent, we had no doubt from these facts, in connexion with the above circumstances, and the previous conduct of the reformers, that it was concerted, by some of them at least, that there should not be a sufficient number at the meeting to do business: that their object was, as Dr. Lansing would say, 'to lie to, under bare poles, and wait for the overturnings of God's providence.' If such *was* their object, and who can doubt it, they were literally *taken in their own craftiness.*

During the session, on motion of Dr. Yates, the following question was put by the chair, to every member of the Board, viz.: 'Are you determined to use your exertions to support Hamilton College?' It was remarked by the Dr., or some other friend of the College, that it implied a determination to support the Institution with its present faculty. Gen. Kirkland thought otherwise; it implied no more, in his view, than a determination to do for the College, what each one should deem best for it, according to his own judgment; and he presumed every member would readily answer the question. Mr. Frost thought it an insult to the members to put such a question to them. Every member answered in the affirmative. Mr. Coe added, as on a former occasion, that it had always been his determination (or that it had ever been his object) to do all he could to promote the interests of the College: and his remark was accompanied with the same *significant* looks as before. (See note 73.)

Notwithstanding the peculiar embarrassments under which Hamilton College has long been laboring, the rumors of its languishing condition, which, for some time, have been so widely circulated, and the fearful apprehensions of its approaching ruin, which, it would *seem*, must for years have been felt, and which have, it is known, been freely expressed by *some* who were tho't to be, and ought to have been, among its most devoted friends and supporters ;—yet it is found, from a comparison of its annual catalogues with those of other Institutions, that few of the younger Colleges in the Northern States,—if the number of scholars may be assumed as a criterion,—were more flourishing for the last eight years immediately preceding the introduction of the revolutionary measures of the Board in 1827 ; and that much the greater part of our long established and most respectable Colleges experienced, during the same period, a greater decrease as to their numbers.

Since the class of Colleges first alluded to, had all of them, in 1827, been about twice, and some of them more than three times as long in operation as Hamilton—had all, at former periods, many more scholars than this College ever had—and during the eight years above mentioned, had usually fallen considerably below it as to numbers ;—why have reports never been abroad, (with a single exception,) to alarm the public mind with respect to *them* also ? Why have not the questions been repeatedly asked, *What is the matter ?—Why are they not more flourishing ?*—Why have not some of their Trustees too been reiterating, *Something must be done ?—Others may have our College and welcome, if they will only pay us for our buildings ?* &c. &c.

It was anticipated, and repeatedly remarked before our Board, that the establishment of the College at Geneva would necessarily retard the growth of Hamilton ; and it is believed, from the local situation of the latter, that no other College in the United States has been more deeply affected by the literary institutions of a novel and popular character, which have recently sprung up in various parts of our country. But not even in a single instance, since the *work of reform* was commenced in this seminary, have those engaged in it alluded to Geneva College as a cause of its decline.

The following facts, derived from the printed catalogues of the Institution, clearly evince its progress since the writer's connexion with it.

No catalogue was printed during the autumn in which I entered upon my office, viz.

In 1817—No. of scholars then less than 60—Graduated at Com. ensuing,			10
1818—19 actual No. as per catalogue	73		13
1819—20	89		14
1820—21	93		18
1821—22	100		15
1822—23	107		33
1823—24	110		17
1824—25	105		23
1825—26	100		28
1826—27 [94]	90		23
1827—28 commenced with	80		17
1828—29 total,	9		0
1829 do.	33	to be graduated,	0

[94] It will be remembered, that in the summer of this year, Gen. Kirkland and his coadjutors, with *abundant* professions of good will towards the College, commenced the enterprise of *saving it from ruin*. Now mark the facts exhibited in the above printed documents. Is it not evident that there were then ninety scholars on our catalogue ; *only twenty less* than at the most flourishing period of the Institution? Did not Gen. K. acknowledge, at this time, (see note 32,) that we made as good scholars, he did not doubt, as they did at Yale, and in some respects better? How, then, in accordance with these facts, and his own concessions, could the General, with *no* motive but a *pure* regard for the College, be saying, that 'it could not be worse off; and therefore it was perfectly safe to make an experiment?'

It appears from the above schedule, that our greatest number of scholars, was in 1823—4 (the year in which the cannon was exploded). During the same year, fifty-four young gentlemen were received into the Institution ; ten more than in any other year.

In consequence of the bursting of the cannon, and the extraordinary measures of the Board ensuing, and the not less extraordinary conduct of some of the members out of the Board in relation to it, there was a decrease of numbers for several years, as is shown by the annual catalogues : and how could it be otherwise?

It is also evident, from facts not to be controverted, that the institution was just recovering from this shock, when the work of *rescuing it from ruin* was undertaken. For, after all the rumors circulated, and the alarm excited by them, in the summer of 1827, we received into College at commencement, and soon after, thirty-two young gentlemen ; quite as great a number as usual so early in the year : and it was ascertained that we should have received fifty at least, had the work of reformation never been attempted. One instructer assured me that as many as ten or eleven of his pupils were prevented from entering the College solely by the reports which reached them a few weeks before commencement.

In November, six weeks after the opening of the first term of study, the four classes amounted to eighty.* But so rapid was the march of *reform*, that at the opening of the second term in February, they were reduced to forty-five,—at the opening of the third term in June, to thirty,—and at the close of this term, at commencement in August, all that remained, with the exception of the Senior class, then graduated, were three Sophomores and six Freshmen. At the commencement of the first term of study, in October of the succeeding year, 1828—9, four only of the eighty who were members of College in

* What strong evidence do these facts furnish, that the College *could not be worse off*; and that its reputation, as was industriously reported during the summer, was such that few young men, if any, would think of entering it the ensuing year?

There is one point of view in which the languishing condition of Hamilton College cannot fail to be a cause of deep and peculiar regret to the friends of religion. Under all the embarrassments with which this Institution has had to struggle, God, in one respect *especially*, has not withheld his smiles from it. During the last ten years, it has been favored with three special visitations of the Holy Spirit.

A comparison of the first twelve classes graduated at Hamilton College with the first twelve classes graduated at other Colleges, (as exhibited in their triennial catalogues,) furnishes conclusive evidence that Hamilton College, as an instrument of good to the church, holds a high relative standing.

November preceding, were still connected with it (see note 87) ; and but six were admitted during the year. And what better was to be expected, when it was known that the Corporation were at variance—some striving to revolutionize the College, and some to sustain it ; that the Institution was stripped of all its professors ; and that a majority of the board were loud in their complaints against the President, and making every exertion in their power for his removal.*

* Yet the faculty, say the reformers, have been the *principal* cause of the decline of the College. The President, say some of them, is the *only* obstacle to its rising. But if the President's want of popularity has been so fatal to the institution, why did the Senior class, who were chiefly and *alone* under his instruction, remain, while the Junior and almost all of the other classes left it ? How is this strange fact to be accounted for ? How is their letter to the President (see note 38) to be accounted for ? Is it in any manner insinuated to the Board, in the memorial of the neighboring citizens, (see meeting of the Board, August, 1828,) or to the Regents, in the petition of the county committee, (see note 85,) that the President has been the cause of all this lamented calamity ? And what evidence is there in the joint memorial of all the classes to the Board, November, 1827, (see note 51,) that the languishing state of the College was owing to the want of ability or faithfulness in the faculty, or to the want of attachment and respect in their pupils for them ? Is it not *indeed* surprising, when the officers of a Seminary are held in honorable estimation by those *thus* situated, that the public sentiment should be so much against them, that its salvation should call for their removal.

In *ordinary* times, in the *natural* course of things, how is public opinion of the faculty of a College *chiefly* formed, but from the scholarship and standing of their pupils, and from the opinions *they* entertain and express of them ?

And granting the President's standing *such*, in the estimation of the public, that the College *could not* be sustained with him at its head ; (as boldly asserted by the reformers,) is it not somewhat remarkable, considering also, all that the majority of the Board have said and done, tending to injure his official character, since their effort to remove him was undertaken, that nearly thirty young men have entered the College (besides others who have applied for admission but could not be received) at and since commencement—and that we are strongly encouraged to expect as great an accession of students during the current year, as was usual in its most prosperous condition ? How are these facts to be reconciled with the declarations of some of the Corporation, and the rumors which have been extensively circulated ? Do they furnish evidence that the President's want of popularity was fatal to the institution ? that he had so far lost the public confidence, that young gentlemen would not repair to it while he retained his office ?

Ministers of the gospel, and candidates for the ministry, educated in the first 12 classes at		Ham. Coll.	64
Do.	do.	Yale	35
Do.	do.	Harvard	34
Do.	do.	Princeton	67
Do.	do.	Dartmouth	47
Do.	do.	Union	32
Do.	do.	Williams	63
Do.	do.	Middlebury	67

Facts not to be questioned, shew conclusively that Hamilton College has not been without reputation abroad, and that it has not suffered, *relatively*, by young gentlemen going from the territory *properly* its own to other Colleges for education.

From an examination of the annual catalogues of 1826—7, printed just before our work of revolution was commenced, and from information otherwise obtained, it appears that there were then in Union and the Colleges of New England twenty-three young gentlemen from that portion of the State of New York denominated the Western District. At the same time there were in Hamilton College (leaving out those from the other Districts of this State,) eighteen from New England, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

What is the inference to be derived from facts like these? Does it appear, after all, that the faculty of Hamilton College can have been greatly deficient in ability and faithfulness? Leaving out of sight all other causes of injury to the Institution, besides those enumerated, (and others, beyond debate, there have been,) is it a matter of surprise that it has not been more flourishing? Indeed, would it have been surprising, had it ceased, years since, to have even *a name to live.*

In the view of all the facts presented, which is the greater wonder, that it has finally languished under all its embarrassments, or that it was, for many years, in so good a degree prosperous?

In the preceding narrative, it has constantly been my object, unless I am greatly deceived, to state what I conceived to be the truth, plainly and fully; and nothing but the truth. If I have erred from my object, I have done it unconsciously.

As to the testimony introduced, from persons not connected with the Board, it is perfectly satisfactory; so far, at least, as their characters are concerned. Notwithstanding many of them have voluntarily expressed a willingness it should be used in whatever manner I might deem desirable, yet I have felt a reluctance to exposing their names, *unnecessarily*, to the public.

As to the correctness of my reasonings and deductions from the data before me, others must judge. Most of the important facts in the history of our difficulties, were made subjects of record soon after their occurrence. In relation to the statement of conversations between individuals of the Board, and myself, and their remarks and observations privately made to me, I am persuaded there is no material mistake, either as to the matter or manner. If, however, it can be made satisfactorily to appear that I have been led into an error, as to any of these particulars, most

readily shall I acknowledge it: for I am not conscious of bearing any ill will towards the persons concerned—of any desire to do them injustice. Unless I am greatly deceived, their own conduct, and nothing else, has imposed upon me the necessity of speaking of them with freedom. That the struggle has been painful, and my trials great, will easily be perceived.

Had personal motives only influenced me, I should have appealed to the public, long since, in vindication of my official character. I have been actuated, I trust, by higher motives. The *future* interests of the College, I have endeavored to keep constantly in view; and it was the opinion of several gentlemen, whose judgment I feel bound to regard with the highest respect, that an expose of the measures and proceedings of the Board would completely alienate public confidence from them as a body, and issue in the immediate and total prostration of the Institution; if not in its final ruin. A calamity so much to be deprecated, was to be avoided, even at the expense of much personal suffering and self-denial. In the judgment of others, as well as in my own, it was my duty to remain inflexible; to commit the concern to HIM who orders all things wisely, and, for a season at least, to endure in silence, the invectives and aspersions of my opposers, and the surmises and censures of the misguided public; with the hope that God, in his righteous providence, would appear for its deliverance, and place the Institution under the auspices of a Corporation who should be worthy of the trust, and whose character would give them an undoubted claim to the respect and patronage of the public.

The ultimate views of the reformers were, beyond all question, totally diverse and discordant. But in their *immediate* object—the removal of the President—they were *all* agreed. However various and clashing their ulterior objects, *here* they had a common object. However different the directions in which they must march, to reach their respective ends, the President was alike an obstacle to all; and not a step could be taken by any, while this obstacle was in the way. No wonder, then, that men whose sentiments differ so widely on religion, politics, and literature, could all agree, and co-operate with the greatest cordiality *here*.

But supposing this object attained; what would have been the consequences? While some were avowing their *opposition to all Colleges*, and would make it a matter of conscience to pull it down—some declaring we had already too many Colleges, and Hamilton might as well be given up as any other—some that sectarianism and beneficiaries of Education Societies had ruined it, and wishing, it is believed, to place it on a foundation which would preclude every thing tending to promote the interests of evangelical truth and vital godliness—some that the Institution must be *modernized*, and striving, (part of them at least, as many do not doubt,) from private motives, to make it *generically* different from a College;—I repeat the question, had I retired from my office, what *must* have been the consequences? How could the Trustees of a College, while a decided majority, in their ultimate

views, differed totally from each other and from the minority, have united efficiently in any plan which would promote its true interests? Must not a struggle have ensued, which would have proved fatal to the Institution? Such I know was the firm conviction of many friends of the College in the Board, and numbers out of it. Let, then, the friends of sound learning and evangelical religion, judge whether, in such circumstances, I did right in taking my stand, and breasting the storm which was beating upon me.

But the storm has spent its rage. A brighter day has dawned upon the College. Since this labor of *reforming* the Institution was commenced, ten members of the Board, who were zealously engaged in it, have retired from their seats. Two or three of this number were originally in the minority; but previous to leaving the Board, they were brought completely into the views of the reformers, and united with them heartily in their efforts.

The seats of all these gentlemen are now occupied by men who are resolved on making all reasonable exertions to sustain the Institution and its faculty, and to raise it to that rank of respectability among kindred Seminaries, which its local advantages claim for it.

Six members, however, (and only six,) whose opposition has been unyielding from the beginning, still retain their seats. But *why* do they retain them? Have not the ears of many been weary of their declaration, It is impossible for the College to prosper with Dr. Davis at its head? so strong is public opinion against him, it cannot be resisted; it is in vain to attempt it? Do not their measures also, (if honest men) prove that such must have been their conviction?

I ask again, then, for what purpose do they retain their seats? Can they hope to control the present majority, powerful as it is? This they have not the presumption to hope. Can they, then, *honestly* unite with them in a hopeless effort? Can they waste their strength to effect an *impossibility?* Or will they say they are willing to see the College restored while under President Davis, to its former flourishing condition? Will they say they can cordially lend their efforts to effect this, after having so long confidently prophesied its ruin as inevitable, unless he was removed from it? If they can say and do this with sincerity, for the honor of human nature, tell the world their magnanimity!

Surely, men standing in the estimation of the community as do Gen. Kirkland and Mr. Hart, and the Rev. Messrs. Lansing, Frost, Aikin, and Coe, will not tell us that they remain in the Board because they believe they can do more *there* to thwart the efforts of the majority, than when out of it—that they wish to preclude men from *their* seats, who would rigorously support the President.

Proprium humani ingenii est, odisse quem læseris, saith the Roman historian. These gentlemen, certainly, will not own themselves willing to verify *this* maxim of heathen philosophy: they will not avow that they are governed by this propensity of our nature—*that they have done so much to injure the President, that they can never forgive him.*

I ask, then, once more, and finally, by what views and feelings *can* these gentlemen be prompted? Will they relieve us from our doubts? will they tell us what are their motives in retaining their seats? and what *good* end, *public* or *private*, they hope to attain by it?[95]

I now leave the whole subject with an intelligent and impartial public. It is for them to decide on whom rests the responsibility of the decline of Hamilton College. Whether this calamity, so deeply to be deplored, in which so many precious interests sympathize, and which has been so extensively a cause of surprise and regret, has, by a *majority* of the Corporation, been *justly* ascribed to the faculty. And it also belongs to the same public to determine, whether an Institution which once experienced their favors, and gave fair promise of becoming a prolific and permanent source of rich blessings to our state and to our nation, shall be suffered to sink into ruin, and its walls, emptied and forsaken, to stand as a beacon merely, to other Colleges, to warn them of the causes of its desolation. For, although there is now a numerous and strong majority of the Board of Trustees, who are in heart and hand united, whose measures will all be devised, adopted, and faithfully pursued, with a sincere regard to the high interests of the Institution, and whose constant object will be to raise it to a conspicuous rank among its sister Seminaries; yet, however wise, well directed, and vigorous may be these measures, they must fail of their desired effect, unless encouraged by an enlightened and public spirited community.

HENRY DAVIS.

Hamilton College, Feb. 1830.

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[95] Mr. Bronson remarked to me, in July or August, 1829, 'When I left the Board, I confidently expected that every member in the opposition would do the same. And I know not on what principle the gentlemen who still retain their seats can justify themselves.'

The following gentlemen compose the present Board of Trustees:

Rev. ASAHEL S. NORTON, D. D. Clinton,
ANDREW YATES, D. D. Sullivan,
NATHANIEL KENDRICK, D. D. Hamilton,
Hon. JOHN B. YATES, Sullivan,
NICHOLAS P. RANDALL, Esq. Manlius,
OTHNIEL WILLIAMS, Esq. Clinton,
GEORGE BRISTOL, Esq. Clinton,
JOHN LEDYARD, Esq. Cazenovia,
JAMES O. MORSE, Esq. Cherry Valley,
ELIZUR GOODRICH, Esq. Utica,
JOSIAH BACON, Esq. Sangerfield,
JOHN J. KNOX, Esq. Augusta,
SEWALL HOPKINS, M. D. Clinton,
Rev. JOHN SMITH, Cooperstown,
JOHN KEEP, Homer,
JOHN F. SCHERMERHORN, Utica,
HENRY DAVIS, Clinton,
Hon. JOSEPH KIRKLAND, Utica,
EPHRAIM HART, Utica,
Rev. DIRCK C. LANSING, D. D. Utica.
SAMUEL C. AIKIN, Utica,
JOHN FROST, Whitesboro',
NOAH COE, New Hartford.

One seat vacant.

APPENDIX.

Just as the foregoing Narrative was printed and about to be published, the Trustees were called together in consequence of a second, but unexpected, communication from the Regents. As it was possible that something might take place at the meeting of the Board which would render an appendix desirable, it was thought expedient to withhold the Narrative from the public till after that period.

SPECIAL MEETING, *March 17th*, 1830.

Present, sixteen members, viz. Rev. Drs. Norton, Yates, Kendrick and Lansing, J. B. Yates, J. O. Morse, N. P. Randall, J. Bacon, J. J. Knox, O. Williams, S. Hopkins, and G. Bristoll, Esqrs., Rev. J. Smith, J. F. Schemerhorn, S. C. Aikin, N. Coe, and J. Frost.

The following is the communication from the Regents:

"At a meeting of the Regents of the University held pursuant to adjournment in the Senate Chamber, Jan. 26th, 1830.—A certified copy of a resolution of the Honorable the Assembly of the 15th of Jan. instant, requesting from the Regents certain information in relation to Ham. Coll. was received and read; it was therefore ordered that the Secretary transmit a copy thereof to the Trustees of said Coll., and request them to communicate to the Regents the information required by the said resolution.

A true extract from the minutes of the Regents.

GIDEON HAWLEY, *Secretary.*

In pursuance of the foregoing proceedings, I herewith transmit to the Trustees of Ham. Coll. a certified copy of the resolution therein referred to, and make the request thereby required to be made by me.

STATE OF NEW YORK.

In Assembly 15th Jan. 1830.

Resolved, That the Regents of the University be required to lay before this house, in their annual report or otherwise, a detailed statement of the affairs of Ham. Coll., showing among other things the grounds of the difficulties under which that Institution is said to have been suffering—the number of students therein during the year past—the number of graduates at the last commencement—the salaries paid each of the officers of the College during the last year, and the general prospects of the Institution.

By order,

F. SEGER, *Clerk.*" [1]

[1] The foregoing communication was received by me shortly after its date. But as the Pres. of the Board of Trustees is the official organ of communi-

The Trustees replied as follows, viz. "The Trustees of Ham. Coll. acknowledge the receipt of a communication from the Regents of the University of the State of N. Y., with a copy of a resolution of the House of Assembly, requesting a detailed statement of the affairs of the Institution, &c.

The Trustees, without reference to or denying the right of the Regents or the Legislature to make this call upon them, most cheerfully proceed to the task of answering the resolution. The statement of the Treasurer herewith transmitted will give a general view of the financial condition of the College; and if more particular information is desired, it will not be withheld.

As to the grounds of the difficulties in relation to the Institution, the Trustees do not deem it discreet to attempt an enumeration of them all; but among the most prominent, the Trustees would mention the facts, that the office of Professor of Mathematics and Nat. Philosophy was vacant from Nov. 1827 to May 1829; and the office of Professor of Languages was vacant from May 1828 to August 1829.—In consequence of these vacancies many of the students then in the Coll. left it and resorted to other Institutions. Others who would probably have joined the College were prevented from entering it. (But how came the professorships to

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cation to that body, after taking a copy of it, I sent it to Gen. Kirkland. I mentioned the fact to a member of the Board from Utica, about two weeks subsequently. The subject was new to him. He was not a little surprised that the Gen. had made no mention of the matter to the members of the Board in that village; and it was presumed, from his silence, that he intended nothing should be done. But measures were taken forthwith to effect a meeting of the Board without the General's aid.

The following copy of the General's reply to the Secy. of the Regents, leaves no doubt as to his wishes on the subject.

"Utica, *Feb.* 16*th*, 1830.

Dear Sir,—Under cover I send you the annual Report of the Trustees of Hamilton College. By the resolution of the Legislature transmitted to the President of the College, it is required that the grounds of the difficulties under which the College is said to have been suffering should be stated. This cannot be done till the Board meets, which will not take place till May.—The duties of the Secretary and Chairman of the Board extend only to the usual annual return, and we do not consider ourselves authorized to go beyond what is mentioned in the Report. A Board of Trustees cannot be convened without great inconvenience to the members, who live many of them at a great distance from the College.

G. Hawley, Esq., *Secy. of the Regents.* Yours respectfully, J. KIRKLAND, *Chairman, &c.*"

The Gen. acted in this matter, it seems, entirely on his own responsibility. It is certain, at least, that he consulted no friend of the College, in the Board, living in Utica—and, as far as I know, no one living elsewhere. Perhaps he advised with the reformers.—But was there greater inconvenience to the Board, in meeting for such a purpose in 1830, than in 1829? Were the members further from the College? Must it not have occurred to the Gen. that the Legislature would have adjourned before the semi-annual meeting of the Board in May, and that, by deferring an answer till that time, both the Legislature and Regents would be completely foiled as to their object? But the records of the Board show that the Gen. and his coadjutors in the work of *reform* had no objections to frequent extra meetings of the Board—notwithstanding the *inconvenience*—so long as the power was in *their* hands, and they were animated with the hopes of success. See App. note 8.

be vacant; and to remain so long vacant?—See Nar. pp. 53, 74, note 66, and pp. 76, 81, 82).

An important difference of opinion among the Trustees as to the most advantageous method of conducting the affairs of the College, and between a part of the Board of Trustees and the Faculty of the College, had probably a tendency further to check the prosperity of the Institution.

The Trustees further report that, so far as respects the number of students and graduates the last year; the present number of students; the officers of the College and their salaries; the amount of the funds of the College, and the number and condition of the buildings, they refer to their annual report made in Feb. last.

The Trustees have the satisfaction further to report that, since August last, the officers appointed as Professors of Mathematics and Nat. Philosophy; of the Languages; and also of Chymistry, have been and are now severally engaged in the active discharge of their official duties; and that the Institution appears to be rapidly rising from the depressed state into which it had fallen.

From the low state of its funds, however, the Trustees do not feel themselves warranted in employing the number of Professors they might otherwise think desirable; yet they think that the great experience of the President, Dr. Davis, his high reputation as an instructer, assisted as he is by the other able men associated with him in the faculty, warrant them in the belief that the Institution cannot fail of affording opportunities for acquiring a classical education highly advantageous to the student and satisfactory to the public—and notwithstanding the cloud that has lately obscured its prospects, it cannot fail under the fostering care of its present officers to obtain the confidence of the community and a high standing among the literary Institutions of our country.

Hamilton College, March 17th, 1830."

When the Trustees came together, I was sick in bed with the influenza. I apprized three of them from abroad who called on me just before the meeting, of the existence of the Narrative; of the circumstanees which, in my view, called for its publication; why it had been delayed; and of my determination to send it out as soon as practicable after the meeting. I further observed that as I was fully aware it would be said, as soon as it should be published, that my friends in the Board had advised me to the measure; I had deemed it my duty to consult none of them on the subject, but to assume the whole responsibility myself. They appeared entirely satisfied with what I had done, and expressed no fears as to the consequences of publication. One of them said, *Let it go;* and another not merely expressed his cordial approbation of my design, but appeared much gratified with it. I requested the gentlemen to regard the information as strictly confidential, and not to communicate it to any of our friends in the Board but under the same restriction.

Soon after the adjournment, I was visited by two of the gentlemen alluded to above, with three other members.

They observed that the business of the meeting had been transacted with great harmony. The foregoing Report, which was to be made to the Regents, was read to me; which, it was said, was adopted unanimously. [2] And I was asked whether it was not wise, as circumstances then were, to avoid all occasion of fresh excitement. We have honorably sustained the faculty, said the gentlemen, in our report to the Regents. The sending abroad your pamphlet, we apprehend, would create prejudices against us, and tend to impede our exertions; as the public would not discriminate between the present and former Board, but regard us as responsible for all that has been done. The time will undoubtedly come, it was added, when it will be very proper for you to publish.

My reply was, that, as they were unacquainted with the character of the Narrative, they could not well judge of its tendency—that I feared the excitement of no such prejudices against the present Board, *in general*, as they apprehended—that I had drawn a broad line of distinction between my supporters and my opposers; between those who had laboured to sustain, and those who had endeavoured to prostrate the College—that it was my object to apprize the public of the part which every member had acted, and to render powerless the efforts of those who were still striving to defeat our exertions.

After a little time spent in conversation, I assured the gentlemen that I would withhold the Narrative from the public till the meeting of the Board in May; and I promised to send each of them a copy as soon as it could be obtained, that they might be enabled to form a judgment for themselves.

Having procured the Report, and given it a deliberate consideration, as soon as the state of my health permitted, I at once came to the conclusion that it would be inexpedient *then* to send abroad the Narrative; and that it would probably be best not to do it during my connexion with the College. In view of the measure which the Board had taken, it seemed desirable to avoid creating fresh excitement as far as practicable. For it was evident that our prospects, by the Report to the Regents, would be materially changed—that both the faculty and College would be presented before the public in an unexpected and encouraging aspect—and that the reformers who still retained their seats would feel constrained by this measure, both in the Board and out of it, to cease from all direct and open opposition to our efforts; should those who had resigned them not be checked by it. The Report to the Regents was published by that body, and the substance of it extensively circulated through newspapers in different parts of the state.

It is needless to give in detail the proceedings of the Trustees

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[2] In saying that the Report was adopted *unanimously*, they could have meant no more than that no one *voted* against it. For I was subsequently informed by several members, that Messrs. Frost and Coe made *strenuous* opposition to adopting it.

subsequent to that period. As soon as it was known that the reformers had ceased to be a majority in the Board, and had lost the power of control, the friends of the Institution took courage, and the gloom of despondency which had settled upon the public mind began to be dispelled. From that time to the present, the College has been steadily regaining the confidence of the public, till it has risen in numbers and reputation, beyond the expectations of its most sanguine friends.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES, *Aug.* 1827, *and Jan.* 1828.

The reader has already been advised that neither of these Reports was to be found. The Secretary repeatedly said to me that he could give no account of them. And to my inquiry he once answered, *I presume some one must have stolen them from the table;* viz., from the table of the Board during our meetings. (See Nar. note 52, p. 61.)

After the death of the Secretary, the last of these Reports and a part of the first were discovered by his successor, Mr. Williams, not on file where they ought to have been, according to usage and in obedience to the resolution of the Board, but among a quantity of loose papers which fell into his hands. I find that I have given, in the Narrative, the substance of these papers with accuracy—without a single error or omission that has an important bearing on any material point. But as they are highly important documents in the history of the origin and progress of our *reform*, and as I have been obliged to use a good deal of freedom in my remarks upon them in the Narrative, I am glad of an opportunity to let them speak for themselves.

REPORT (IN PART) OF THE COMMITTEE, 21*st August*, 1827.

The committee appointed at the meeting of the Board, to take into consideration the state of the College generally, connected with the other objects embraced in the resolution, and to report thereon, respectfully

Report, in part,

That on the subject of a personal nature mentioned in the resolution, no specific statement or change has been made, and no proof offered; and your committee are not *personally* acquainted with any facts which can in their opinion render it necessary to make any further inquiry at the present time upon this branch of the resolution. [3]

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[3] Could the committee expect persons to come to them voluntarily and *make specific statements and charges* against the professor, and *offer* proof to substantiate them? Did not the resolution make it their duty to *inquire* for facts and proof? Will Gen. Kirkland deny that he *refused* proof when *offered* to him by the President of the College? Or will the committee deny that Mr. Ford, on whose motion they were appointed, had been previously induced to believe that *some of them were personally acquainted* with rumors, at least, which then, in their opinion, made *inquiry necessary?* See resolution, narrative p. 32, and also note 39, p. 47.

In relation to the state and condition of the College in general, your committee find that after the debts of the Institution are discharged, there will remain of productive funds, consisting of bonds, mortgages, notes and accounts which are good, only about $15,000: that the incidental and current annual expenses of the College (exclusive of instruction) consisting of the Treasurer's and Clerk's salaries, Chaplain's compensation, sweeping, ringing of the bell, expenses of the Trustees, including those of commencement, repairs of the buildings, printing, postage, &c. have amounted to about $800: and that to this sum may be added something more for the repairs and care of the additional buildings and grounds, and repairs of the apparatus in the philosophical and chymical departments; which in the belief of your committee will amount to nearly $1000 per annum:—that there is now annually paid to the instructers in the College $4935;—that the whole sum charged for tuition, exclusive of room rent and contingencies (estimating the number of scholars at 100) will amount to $2550; —and that for two years past there has been actually paid for instruction imparted during this period an amount of only $1750 per annum; leaving a balance of $3185 due for instruction, which has been provided for out of the other funds of the College. [4] In addition to the above sums there is charged to each student $9 per annum for room rent, which is paid at the time of the tuition bills. This sum may be considered as a fund partly to be appropriated to defray the expenses of instruction and repairs; its more appropriate object is to supply the fund which is to meet the ordinary and extraordinary repairs of the College buildings:—and although the Institution might continue a little longer in its present state, yet the period would very shortly arrive when its funds would be entirely exhausted, and there would be nothing left for the payment of the incidental and current expenses.

Such being the condition of the College, your committee are of opinion, as guardians of the Institution, and having high and important trusts to discharge, and regarding the interests and character of the present faculty of the College, that imperious necessity demands the application of some remedy against the entire destruction of the funds, and a total prostration of the Institution, both which consequences must inevitably follow, if the College is suffered to continue in its present state.

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[4] But did the committee mean to insinuate that what was charged for tuition, but not punctually paid, was of no value? was absolutely lost? Their language implies unequivocally that the balance, $3185, was actually paid to the instructers—and paid too, it seems, out of the permanent funds of the College. That such was not the fact, the Treasurer and my former associates can bear witness. Instead of receiving the amount of my own salary—$1800 annually—during these two years, I received from August, 1825, to August, 1826, $650 only, and from August, 1826, to August, 1827, but $1304. I make these remarks in order to show, as stated in the Narrative (note 34, p. 39), that it was the design of the committee, as was believed, to present the most alarming statement possible respecting the condition of the finances, that the Board might be induced to adopt their report and farm out the College.

Your committee have been much embarrassed and greatly perplexed to arrive at any definite and satisfactory conclusion as to the course, under existing circumstances, proper to be pursued; and in their reflections on the subject, many and almost insuperable difficulties have presented themselves, since any measures which shonld materially change the present state and organization of the Institution might in some degree affect the character and interests of the faculty.

Your committee are of the opinion, that hereafter such a plan of instruction might be adopted, and such a course of studies pursued as will render the money received for tuition adequate to the payment of the instructers, and that the character, reputation, and in fact the continuance of the College, must depend almost entirely on the talents, the learning, the character, the popularity and exertions of the teachers, connected with a course of studies more conformable to modern times, and judiciously adapted to the present wants and feelings of the public.

From the present condition of the state and the temper and disposition manifested by the Legislature for some sessions past towards literary institutions, your committee cannot indulge a hope that any aid will be received from that quarter, and from past experience they have as little expectation that any thing will be given by wealthy and benevolent individuals, as they believe nothing of any considerable value has been received from individual donation since the first organization of the College. [5]

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[5] Were the committee ignorant of the fact, that till within the last four months antecedent to their Report, no aid, since the organization of the College, had been asked of individuals; and that within this period, and with little effort, $4000 had been subscribed towards the endowment of the Divinity Professorship? (See Narrative p. 41.)

Subsequent facts show conclusively that the committee erred in judgment on this subject.

At commencement, August 1831, a resolution was passed by the Board of Trustees, that an effort be made to raise by subscription, within two years, $40,000 for the permanent endowment of three professorships. The agent appointed by the executive committee soon entered on the work. As the inhabitants of the county of Oneida have a personal interest in the College not felt in other parts of the state, it was thought expedient to complete the effort in this county before aid should be solicited abroad; and all that was then hoped for from the county, was one-third of the sum to be raised. After obtaining, in a few months, $9000, exclusive of Utica, Rome, Verona, Vernon, and some other towns in the county of considerable wealth, the agent visited the city of Utica. At a numerous meeting of the citizens holden on the 8th of December, after passing several resolutions expressing their views of the high importance of the Institution to this central part of the state, and of their duty and interest in co-operating to sustain it, they further resolved *unanimously* to make an effort to raise in that place alone a sum sufficient for the endowment of one professorship. A committee of twenty-five gentlemen was appointed to solicit subscriptions from their fellow-citizens—and the agent, of course, as his services were not wished for, retired from the place. Many of the principal men in the city were confident of success. But very unfortunately, the committee delayed their effort till about the 1st of August; and soon after it was commenced, and a few liberal subscriptions made, the city was visited by the epidemic cholera, and all business suspended. Had the committee entered on the work assigned them imme-

The Institution, therefore, in its present state, must look to the tuition money for the payment of its instructers. Your committee believe, if a suitable plan of study is adopted, and efficient instructers *continued*, the College may yet flourish, and gain an interest in the feelings of the community, and become highly reputable and useful without farther pecuniary aid. [6]

Few literary Institutions are more favorably placed than ours, situated as it is nearly one hundred miles from any similar Institution, in a populous, growing, rich, and healthy country, provided with ample, spacious, and commodious buildings of every kind for the accommodation of students; and furnished with a library, and philosophical and chymical apparatus sufficient to afford the ordinary facilities of instruction.

Your committee are further strengthened in the opinion above advanced, when they consider that the school at Round Hill, in North Hampton, and the College at Amherst, have lately been established without funds, without buildings, without libraries, without a philosophical and chymical apparatus, and that the

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diately after the meeting took place—as they should have done, and as they would have done, had the advice of the agent been regarded—and prosecuted it with vigor, it is the opinion of gentlemen of high standing there, that $10,000 would have been raised within a week: and it is fully believed that the amount of the subscriptions, instead of being but about $11,000 at our late commencement (one year from the beginning of the effort) would have fallen little short of $40,000. The effect of the delay in Utica fully verified the apprehensions of the agent, and which he early and repeatedly expressed to some of the committee. The resolutions passed at the meeting in that place were published and extensively circulated. It was conceived that the citizens of Utica had virtually *pledged* themselves to the College and to the public for the endowment of a professorship. The substance of the reply given to the agent, with almost one voice, by gentlemen to whom he applied subsequently, both in the county of Oneida, and out of it, was,—'What have the people in Utica done? I wish to know whether they will redeem their pledge. I choose to wait, and see what the men of wealth in that place give, before I do any thing for the College.' The agent, as he had anticipated, soon found himself so paralyzed in his exertions by the delay in Utica, that he was obliged to suspend his labours altogether, till an example should be set in that place.

While it affords matter for deep regret that our efforts have been thus obstructed, I take pleasure in stating the above facts; as they completely repel the aspersion which has often been cast upon the people of this vicinity, by some of the former members of the Board; viz. *That they felt little interest in Hamilton College and would do nothing for it*—and as they prove conclusively that the principal *ostensible* reason of the reformers, for modelling the Institution anew and farming it out to the faculty, had no foundation. (See Narrative, note p. 42.)

The inhabitants of this region, it is believed, will give further proof of their attachment to Hamilton College. But should the enterprise ultimately fail, the city of Utica must be responsible for it.

[6] *Procured* was first written in the above sentence in the place of *continued*. The former term was afterwards *partially* erased (as is perfectly obvious) and the latter substituted. It seems that the committee, after *mature* consideration, did not deem it expedient to insinuate to the Board, that, in their opinion, the instructers then in office *were* not efficient. But how does the import of this sentence, as it now stands, accord with the subsequent acts of the committee and their associates in their efforts for a reform?

money received for tuition in those Institutions more than pays the cost for instruction, and that they are both at this time in a flourishing and prosperous condition, and increasing in numbers. (See Nar. note 32, p. 38.) [7] Your committee consider it a duty they owe, as well to the College as the faculty, to give immediate information to the latter of the condition of the funds of the Institution, and to inform them that the *only* means which the Trustees possess of rendering them compensation for their services are the moneys which may be received from tuition.

Considering that the present faculty have been invited to the College, and that in accepting they may have relinquished other and more advantageous situations, your committee have thought it *no more* than an act of justice to make them the offer of continuing in the Institution, provided they should be willing to afford efficient instruction under such regulations and modifications as the *Trustees may deem* for the best interests of the College, looking for their compensation *alone* to the money which may be received for tuition:—the Trustees giving to the faculty the use of the College buildings and grounds, together with the library, philosophical and chymical apparatus, under such regulations as may be necessary for the safety and preservation of the property.

And your committee recommend the appointment of a committee at the present meeting of the Board to confer with the faculty upon the state and condition of the College, and to ascertain if they will afford the instruction and continue in the government of the Institution upon the above terms. (See Nar. notes 32, 33, p. 38, &c.)

Should the faculty decline continuing in the College, your committee recommend that a new organization be immediately made, having regard to the present state of the funds, making the compensation of the instructers depend AS FAR AS PRACTICABLE upon the number of pupils. (See Nar. p. 47, 48, 49.)

Your committee are fully sensible of the inconveniences and embarrassments that may attend a new organization of the College, and that the Institution may suffer a temporary injury. Yet they believe the sooner the remedy is applied the better; that longer delay would only increase the evil; and they indulge a hope that the College, under a new modification, should it be necessary, may yet flourish and fulfil the just expectation of its friends, and disappoint the anticipations of its enemies.

Your committee have not been unmindful of the very delicate relation that exists between the Trustees and present faculty of the College,—that no steps can be taken which go materially to change the government and instruction of the Institution, or which tend to lessen or essentially alter the amount and certainty of their compensation, without bearing directly upon them:—and it

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[7] It is not long since the public were apprized that this College was about $40,000 in debt, and without any means of paying even the interest of it—and that unless $50,000 could be raised for the Institution, and raised soon, its very existence would be in danger.

would have given great pleasure to your committee to have fallen upon any other method which would have enabled the Board to continue the faculty with the amount and certainty of compensation which they have hitherto enjoyed. [How is this declaration to be reconciled with the subsequent proceedings of the members of this committee and their coadjutors?] For the Trustees to suffer the Institution to remain in its present condition would, in the opinion of the committee, be a violation of the duty which as guardians of the College they owe to the public, and to the cause of literature and science. Your committee feel fully sensible that the condition of the College required earlier attention, and that its interests have materially suffered in consequence of there having been no meeting of the Board of Trustees for the period of two years previous to the last meeting. [8] They believe that it will require the active and persevering exertions of the whole Board to continue the College in such a manner and under such auspices as to render it reputable in public estimation, and to give it that character and standing, compared with its sister Institutions, which will enable it to compete successfully with them for students.

The committee contemplate submitting hereafter a supplementary report, bearing more immediately upon the two other branches of the resolution under which they were appointed, viz. the government and instruction of the College. In adopting this course they were of the opinion that the Board would be able to act more readily and with less embarrassment, by having the difficult branches of the report disconnected. [9]

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[8] That is, no meeting with a quorum, or majority. They might have stated that there had been six such meetings since May 1st, 1822. And there was one such—as we have already seen—in November, 1827. Yet about two-thirds of the Board were living all this time within nine miles of Clinton. At all such meetings, however, business was transacted informally. Even the honors of the College were conferred, in the same manner as in a full board, and ratified and confirmed subsequently when a quorum was present. It is difficult to conceive, then, how the interests of the College could have *materially* suffered. But the *fact* itself is not to be overlooked. It evinces an apathy in the Board of Trustees, and a neglect of the duties of their high trust, which admit of no apology. I defy these gentlemen to show me the same want of fidelity in the Trustees of any other College.

But the Trustees of Hamilton College are not chargeable with neglect of duty, in *this respect*, from May, 1827, down to May, 1829. During this period, which comprises the long and painful agony—all the sacrifices made, and all the efforts so strenuously put forth by the reformers for the *salvation* of the Institution—there were no less than eleven meetings of the Trustees; at all which, excepting two, as appears from their minutes, there was a large majority. The reasons were obvious. (See Nar. pp. 58, 59, 109.) Now the above fact *alone* is enough to account for the downfall of this Institution, in the view of any man experienced in the discipline of a College. Eleven meetings of the Board of Trustees in two years!! Why even Harvard or Yale could not but wither and languish under *such* loving-kindness of their *nursing fathers*.

[9] No doubt their first object being attained, viz. the resignation of the faculty, their second object, which was the new organization of the College and the introduction of men into office who were to rely, *as far as practicable, for compensation, on the number of pupils*, could have been effected *more readily and with less embarrassment*.

In submitting this branch of the report, your committee do it with diffidence, as they are by no means confident that they have met the views of the Board, or answered the objects intended by their appointment. [10] And they will feel much gratified and greatly relieved if the Board should be able under the present circumstances of the College, to adopt some other and better plan for the continuance of the Institution, and the preservation of its funds.

August 20th, 1827." [11]

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE, *Jan. 9th*, 1828.

To the Board of Trustees of Hamilton College—

The committee appointed to report to the Board of Trustees on the subjects mentioned in the resolution of this Board of Sept. 19th, 1827, beg leave respectfully to report—

That they view the subject referred to them as immensely important, involving all that is valuable in a system of education, and all that is interesting to the prosperity and reputation of this Institution.

Your committee are impressed with the conviction of the impossibility of carrying any system of education into successful operation without the cordial co-operation of the faculty. In the opinion of your committee, the system of government and instruction in a College should be the system of the faculty, and not merely that of the Trustees.

All innovations upon, or alterations in an old system especially should proceed from the faculty, and be submitted to and approved of by the Trustees. [12] Your committee confidently believe

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[10] No wonder that they should submit *such* a report with *diffidence*—but how was it possible for them to *doubt* whether they had *met the views of the Board*, or *answered the objects intended* by Mr. Ford in their *appointment*? They could not but be *confident* that they had cautiously avoided the principal, if not the *sole* object of that gentleman in his motion for a committee. (See Nar. p. 32, &c., p. 38, and note 39, p. 47.) *Some* of the committee, at least, must have known that Mr. Ford had been previously *led* to believe that *they* also had the same object in view. A man of Mr. Ford's sense of honor could not but look upon such duplicity with unutterable detestation. When informed that the President of the College said before the Board in relation to this report, 'Were the gentleman who moved for the appointment of the committee present, he would frown with indignation on such a procedure,' he replied, *I would have done it.* (See Nar. p. 47.) And he added, *I remarked to* (*blank*) *that it was the most disgraceful procceding I ever heard of on the part of honorable men.*

[11] I greatly regret that the second branch of the report made by this committee has not come to light; as it clearly showed the *ultimate* object of the *reformers*—and in some of them, as there was no room for doubt, *personal* designs. But such was thought to be its character, it appears, that it was not deemed safe to allow it a resting-place even among the unsorted papers of the secretary.

[12] But will the committee say that a *single* member of their faculty was consulted in relation to the innovations or alterations recommended in this report, or in the report made in August? That these plans were not *ex-*

that it would be utterly useless to attempt to prescribe to a faculty a system either of instruction or government which they do not fully approve. To direct what shall be done is one thing, to cause it to be done well and effectually is another and totally different thing. Every man can carry into effect his own system better than the system of another. And it may be true that a system somewhat defective, well and thoroughly executed, is more useful than a more perfect system imperfectly executed.

The success of any system, in the opinion of your committee, depends almost entirely upon those who are to carry it into effect. [13] Your committee are also fully of opinion that it would be unwise and injudicious in the Board to prescribe any system essentially new, unless they can be nearly or quite unanimous in its adoption. Your committee therefore feel much embarrassment in recommending any system, because they do not know that it will meet the views of their fellow-members or those who are to carry it into effect. Indeed, there is an intrinsic difficulty in prescribing any system of instruction or government sufficiently minute to meet every exigency. After all that can be done in this way, very much must depend upon the qualifications and dispositions of the officers of an Institution.

Entertaining these views, your committee can merely suggest such things as they think would be successful if cordially embraced and carried into full effect.

The great objects of an enlightened education are,

1. To soften and refine the manners.
2. To give health and vigor to the body.
3. To strengthen, enrich, and invigorate the mind.
4. To cultivate the virtuous affections of the heart, and produce the highest possible degree of moral excellence. As a consequence of all, to give to an Institution an extensive wholesome literary and moral influence in the community. Your committee have intended to make these principles the foundation of their recommendation. In framing a system experience is the best guide, and your committee feeling their own want of it, have availed themselves, as extensively as their limited opportunities would allow, of the experience of others. (But they wished no aid from the experience of their faculty. See Narrative, note 49, p. 58.)

Your committee are of opinion that in this age of experiment, as well as of improvement, there may be danger of attempting innovations which wisdom did not devise, and experience has not sanctioned; and there may also be danger of resisting improve-

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clusively plans of the Trustees? How then does the practice of the committee correspond with their principles? How does the treatment *repeatedly* experienced by the faculty from the Trustees and their committees correspond with them?

[13] Had such opinions always been entertained and *practically* regarded by the Trustees of Hamilton College, immense evil would have been avoided.

ments because they are innovations, from the disinclination of the human mind to incur responsibility, especially in cases where the effects are to be felt by others, and, before they are experienced, the changes that are to produce them must be subjected to the scrutiny of a judging world. Your committee are of opinion that no system is to be abandoned simply because it is old, and *no* theory adopted because it is new. We are to examine old usages in education with candor, and fearlessly reject such as appear destitute of excellence, or to have outlived their usefulness; and to adopt with caution, but with courage, such changes as promise to be real improvements, or as are conformable to the condition, or demanded by the wants of society. In performing the duty assigned us, your committee have endeavored to regard the present situation of our country and the character of the age, but have been essentially controlled by a view of the acknowledged situation of this Institution. That situation they conceive to be one that imperiously requires a vigorous effort to avert its downward course, and an essential change to prevent its utter ruin.

Oppressed with this embarrassing consideration, your committee are induced, as the best result of their reflections, to submit to this Board the following plan.

The President shall be appointed by the Board, under an agreement that he shall tender his resignation at the expiration of (blank) years.

He shall nominate to the Board all the officers of the Institution, who shall reject or accept them, but shall not appoint any without his nomination. [14]

He shall fix their salaries and be responsible for the payment; and the Board shall have no responsibility except as to the salary of the Professor of Divinity, whose salary shall be paid and duties prescribed by the Board, with the assent of the President.

No officer shall be removed by the President without the concurrence of the Board, but he may prescribe and change their duties at his pleasure in any manner not inconsistent with the established regulations of the Institution.

He shall receive all that may be derived from tuition, room rent and board, and shall have no other compensation except such sum as this Board shall agree to pay.

He shall have the use of the College buildings and grounds, the philosophical and chymical apparatus and library, free of rent; he making all ordinary repairs, and being responsible for their preservation, and return them in as good condition as when received, except ordinary decay.

To enable the President to render the Institution useful, he must have the utmost extent of authority which the charter will allow.

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[14] But the charter says, the President shall hold his office for and during good behaviour. And suppose the plan recommended by the committee adopted, and the President should turn infidel; or become a bigoted Christian sectarian, and would nominate none but those of his own communion?

Therefore your committee recommend that he have authority to prescribe the course of studies, subject to the approbation of the Trustees. Your committee refrain, therefore, from any specification on this subject. Their views, however, would be—

1. That no less be required for admission than at present.
2. That the present course be not essentially diminished.
3. That Political Economy, the study of the American Constitution and History be introduced.
4. That provision be made for the study of Modern Languages, Civil Engineering, Book-keeping, in addition to, not in lieu of any other studies, by those who may choose, and in the opinion of the faculty can do it with profit. [15]

For encouragement to exertion your committee would recommend—

1. Examinations *thorough* in the presence of literary gentlemen.
2. Prizes for composition and elocution.
3. Frequent graduation according to merit.
4. Accounts rendered to parents at the close of each term.
5. The names of the first third of each class to be published annually after examination, according to merit. [16]

The object of all would be to offer to young minds the most stimulating incentives to attain the highest degree of intellectual excellence. To superadd the purer and higher motives arising from the sense of duty, to improve their faculties in order to be useful in proportion to their capacities, and to induce them to seek for excellence from Christian principles, must be the work of constant inculcation and daily instruction.

For the preservation and improvement of morals, your committee recommend—

1. That no student be received or suffered to remain, who does not sustain a good moral character.
2. All students, except Beneficiaries, shall board in the Commons.
3. No student shall be permitted to leave the College grounds, except in company with an officer, without a written permission from the President.
4. Every student to deliver all his money to the President, who shall put it to his credit, and pay for what he shall deem necessary.
5. No student to receive any company from out of the College, without immediately informing a member of the faculty.
6. The whole time to be employed, from the hour of rising to rest, in study, exercise, or refreshment, in a manner and according to a division of time to be prescribed by the President.

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[15] But the committee would have known, had they done their duty as Trustees, that several of the above studies had long before been introduced.

[16] And must we believe it was the *design* of the committee to insinuate that hitherto we had had no such examinations as they recommended—no prizes for declamation—no graduations according to merit—no accounts rendered to parents at the close of the term?

7. All the students to retire to bed at 10 o'clock, after which the rooms shall be visited by the officers.

8. All the classes to study in the presence of an officer.

9. The intercourse between the members of the faculty and the students, to be free, kind, familiar and social, calculated to give to the officers a parental care, feeling, and authority, and to produce in the students affection, confidence, and respect.

The business of instruction to be not merely literary, stated and formal, but to embrace every thing appertaining to advancement in science, to moral and religious instruction, and social duty.

Your committee believe that the usefulness of literary institutions depends vastly more upon their moral purity than upon any course of studies that can be prescribed, and that without its preservation, high attainments in science or excellence of character, in any respect, will be very rare.

For the preservation of health and vigor of body, your committee recommend that daily exercise, at stated times and in the presence of one or more officers, be made universal and indispensable. For this purpose gymnastic exercises to a limited extent, requiring small expense, may be introduced, and other exercises may be left to the choice of the student, provided they are all athletic and manly, and approved of by the faculty.

For want of exercise in due time, and of sufficient quantity, many a youth of rare promise has gone to a premature grave; and many more have endured a more protracted, but painful, inefficient, and comparatively useless existence.

The labours of literary and professional men require as much strength and firmness of constitution, as the toils of husbandmen. Experience proves that most men of sedentary pursuits will not take measures to preserve their constitutions till they find them impaired. It is then the work of restoration, not of preservation, far more doubtful in its results, retarding the course of exertion and usefulness, and consuming time that might otherwise be valuable. General and earnest recommendations to exercise prove ineffectual. Youth cannot realize the experience of others, and will not profit by it. Exercise must therefore be deemed a part of the system of education, made compulsory, and performed under the direction of the faculty.

To improve the manners of the pupils, *a lady of refinement and intelligence*, with a member of the faculty, *should preside at table, and exercise a maternal superintendence over the students. Secondly*, Cleanliness of person and of room, decencies of dress and of manners, should be subjects of official regulation and enforcement —and to promote these objects, as well as to preserve health, there should be an absolute prohibition of the use of tobacco in every form, unless prescribed as medicine by a physician.

Your committee would also recommend frequent visits of the students by invitation at the houses of the officers. Your committee believe that constant and free intercourse between the officers and students, in addition to much mental improvement, not

to be otherwise acquired, would insure, in a great degree, preservation of morals and ease of government.

With the proposed regulation for ample exercise, your committee believe that only two vacations of three weeks each, the one in the spring and the other in the autumn, are all that would be necessary, and that economy and utility would be promoted by having no more.

Your committee are sensible that to give effect and success to a system, the outlines of which we present you, will require a corps of intelligent and efficient men—men capable of exertion and willing to make it. The plan presents the highest inducement of profit and reputation. It makes the President what we think he should be, the source of all measures, and responsible for the success of them. If he succeeds he will be sure of reward and reputation, and certain of enjoying the consolation arising from the conviction of eminent usefulness. If he fails, there can be no shifting of responsibility or shrinking from it.

It will require from the Board of trust constant encouragement and vigorous co-operation. The trial of a new experiment, affecting in its results our own reputation, will stimulate us to exertion. While we shall have less responsibility in the result of particular measures, we shall feel more anxiety for the success of the general plan, because it is our own, and because it is unusual.

If the plan shall be deemed bold, we trust it will be believed that we have not been unaware that from many habituated to contemplate long established usages it would receive that character. But we believe it is founded upon principles that generally govern human action. If the plan proposed should be deprecated, on account of the consequences it may produce to the present Faculty of this Institution, we are confident it will not be thought that we have been free from those feelings which it produces in the breasts of others. But we deem the preservation and future usefulness of an important Institution at stake upon the measures we have been charged to devise, and the influence of sympathy would ill accord with the manly performance of a momentous public trust.

If a plan can be devised which shall promise to secure the great object in view and be free from all unpleasant consequences, we shall cheerfully award to the author the merit of superior invention, judgment, and discretion. (See Nar. pp. 62, 63, and notes 53, 54.) *Jan. 9th*, 1828.

PROPOSITION OF GERRIT SMITH, ESQ.

At a special meeting of the Board, March 1829, they were informed by Mr. Keep, that Mr. Smith had recently suggested to him a PLAN by which he (Mr. S.) thought the College might be raised; and was willing, should it meet the approbation of the Board, to undertake its accomplishment. Mr. K. stated a few of its outlines, but did not feel himself at liberty to make such a development of it, as to enable them to form a judgment of its expediency. By reason of the suggestion of Mr. K. a committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. A. Yates, Goodrich, Williams, Knox, and Davis, to confer with Mr. Smith. A time and

place were designated by them for the meeting, and Dr. Yates was requested to advise Mr. S. of the arrangement. But Mr. S., instead of meeting the committee, presented to them, through the hands of the Dr., his proposition in writing. Had not Mr. S. been a member of the Board, I should not consider myself at liberty to lay his communication before the public. But as he had borne a prominent part, *at times at least*, among the majority in their efforts and manœuvres for a *reform*; and as it furnishes a practical commentary on the measures of my opposers, and additional evidence of the spirit by which they have been actuated, and corroboration of many of the remarks and statements in the preceding Narrative, no apology, I am confident, will be deemed necessary.

Peterboro', March 23d, 1829.

Rev. Dr. Yates,

My Dear Sir,—The subject of your conversation with me last Saturday has been much in my mind ever since. The concerns of a College may be brought under the general distinction of its internal and external interests. The first being the charge of the Faculty, and the other of the Corporation. On the last branch I will make a few remarks.

Formerly no serious inconveniences were felt from the great defect in the kind of government exercised by the Corporation of a College. That defect consists in the government being so very general, and distant, and inconstant. A College at the present time, that is highly prosperous, may succeed in spite of this defect—and the principal reason why all our Colleges may not succeed as well now, as they formerly did under a government sitting thus loosely about them, is the rapid multiplication within a few years of similar Institutions in our country.

The competition among these schools has, of course, been sharpening as their number increased; and inducing a closer, more active, and particular government of them. This competition and these consequences of it have been the greater, because many of these schools are individual property, and are conducted under the vigilant eyes and by the stimulated hands of self-interest. It is already with our superior schools as with our manufactories. A few years ago, and our manufacturing establishments succeeded pretty well, even under the very general and negligent charge of the incorporated companies that conducted them. Now, private enterprise, in the same channels, has either driven those establishments ashore, or necessitated them to come under a more efficient direction. A similar competition among our schools of a higher grade is loudly demanding a similar change in the government of them—and perhaps there is not one of them under such vital need of this change as Hamilton College. [17] For if the government

[17] It is evident that Mr. S. entertains the same views of a College as have been attributed to some of his predecessors in office; viz. that they regarded their trust much as a manufacturing company regard their establishment. God forbid that such views should be found hereditary in the Board. (See Nar. note 16, p. 13.)

usually exercised by a Board of Trustees over a College is not adequate to sustain the Institution against its multiplying competitors, how totally insufficient must such a government be to revive and invigorate a dead College. What remedy is within the reach of your Board?—I think of nothing that promises so well to raise the College as the enlistment of individual responsibility in the undertaking. That responsibility I never felt to any great extent while I was a member of the Board, and probably it was so with my fellow-members. To make that responsibility the most effectual, let it be made to extend to the property, as well as to the character of the person you load with it. [18] Where will you find the right man to come under that heavy responsibility?

In a conversation with Mr. Keep the other evening, I was vain enough to volunteer myself for it. I am conscious of having three qualifications for the service. The first is, a strong attachment to my alma mater. The second is, that I am in such circumstances as would probably justify me in incurring the hazard of so much of my property. And the third is, my solicitude—quite as ambitious as any man should be—to preserve, in all my pursuits, a good and respectable name. But these qualifications, important as they are, do not comprise all that are needed for this service. It is desirable that the person embarking in it be able to add to these qualifications an extended reputation for integrity, wisdom, and learning—such a reputation, in short, as would inspire a very general and strong confidence in the success of the undertaking to which he puts his hand.

I most earnestly wish that the Board might find a man of such eminent fitness willing to pledge his faithful and persevering endeavors—his purse and his character to the revival of an Institution, in whose fall so many precious public interests sympathize and deeply suffer. I know not where you can find such a man. Probably, Henry Dwight, of Geneva, is as nearly so as any man in this part of the country: but he has such an aversion to a College, that he would make a conscience of pulling down rather than building up one. (Poorly qualified indeed, then, for *such* a work, must be *all* other men in this part of our country. See Nar. note 70, p. 80.) Should the Board be pleased with such a scheme as was barely *hinted* to them by Mr. Keep; and should they, after failing to find a suitable man for it, think proper to charge me with the high trust that the scheme contemplates reposing in some individual, you are at liberty to say I will gratefully accept of it on the following terms.

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[18] But if a man *loaded* with the responsibility of a Trustee of a College cannot feel *that* responsibility *to any great extent* without such motives, viz. unless his *property* as well as *personal character* is put at stake, in what situation can he be expected to feel his responsibility *to any great extent*, without them?

But does the Christian missionary, statesman, or *philanthropist*, I would ask Mr. Smith, stand in need of such motives to enable him to feel *his* responsibility *to any great extent*? Mr. S., I trust, is no stranger to higher motives than his concession seems to imply he had been conscious of.

1. Term of the trust to be six years.

2. I am to have the use of all the College grounds, buildings, and their contents.

3. The Board to repair and improve, from time to time, in such manner as they may think proper, the said grounds and buildings, and also the apparatus and library.

4. The Board to complete the north edifice, if the increase of students within the six years should require it. Looking no farther than the interest of the treasury, they would of course be pleased to have this expenditure become necessary.

5. Commencement dinner to be provided by the Board.

6. The Board to be at no expense for sweeping rooms, halls, &c.; nor in providing fuel, nor in ringing the bell.

7. I am to defray the whole expense of providing teachers—and this item of expense is not to fall below 25 to $30,000 in the six years;—will perhaps exceed this estimate.

8. I am to receive all charges for tuition and diplomas; and also any rents that may be derivable from any portion of the premises.

9. I am to draw on the treasurer of the Board for $10,000—This sum is $1000 more than I spoke of to Mr. Keep. But I must necessarily be at considerable expense, aside from paying the salaries of the members of the faculty. And in making up the $9000, I looked at the subject of the salaries only. The $10,000 I am to draw for in the following manner:—1st year $3000, 2d year $2000, 3d year $1500, 4th year $1500, 5th year $1000, 6th year $1000. My drafts in each year to be quarterly and equal. In the annual report which I shall be bound to make to the Board of the particular condition of the College, I am to render an exact account of my receipts and disbursements in the premises. At the end of the six years, or at the end of any previous year, when the Trustees shall request me to relinquish this trust, or when I may choose to relinquish it; I am to pay to the treasurer of the Board whatever surplus of income over expenditures may be remaining in my hands at the time. Should there be a deficiency instead of a surplus, that deficiency to be my loss. There is to be no interest account between the treasurer and myself.

10. As the Corporation have no right to put into other hands unconditionally and beyond their power of resumption at any time the government of the College, so, of course, they are not to suffer myself or others to introduce any essential or important changes in the studies, government, or general regulations of the College without their consent,—nor are they to suffer myself or others to appoint or have the exclusive nomination of any member of the faculty of the College. I need but add, that the Corporation will readily perceive the suitableness and importance of gratifying my wishes on these subjects during the continuance of my trust, as far as may possibly consist with their sense of propriety.

11. I could not be induced to receive this trust without the privilege of having an entirely new faculty; and therefore, if

President Davis should persist in holding his place, the negotiation between the Board and myself is at an end. I have not come hastily to this conclusion; nor have I lightly esteemed your last Saturday's arguments against it. I am President Davis's friend. I have been his pupil, and his kindness and faithfulness to me while standing in that interesting and endearing relation to him, can never be forgotten by me. Such are my feelings towards that venerable man and his excellent family, that his continuance in the Presidency of the College would be to me a most agreeable feature in my contemplated connexion with it, were it not that, in my judgment, higher considerations, and before which all personal gratifications must give way, are decidedly opposed to it.

Dr. Davis came into his present office furnished with the most ample and flattering testimonials for his fitness for it. (If Mr. S. means by testimonials *written* credentials, I had none. See Narrative, note 36, p. 45.) I cannot believe that he has lost any of his *intrinsic* fitness for it. I know him well, and cheerfully disavow all suspicion of his being in his dotage. Still, Hamilton College cannot rise under President Davis. Hamilton College must present a new aspect, a new state of things, before it can gain public confidence. And can it have that aspect, that apparently new state of things, as long as President Davis continues at the head of it? Produce a change in its condition, as extensive as you please, and yet forbear to change this most essential feature, and Hamilton College, in spite of all you have done, will continue to be, in the superficial view of the public mind, the same old thing of which it has become so sick and weary. [19] My friend, Dr. Kendrick, in his remarks on this subject before the Board (August, 1827,) admitted that public opinion is *omnipotent*, but he added very happily, that it is not immutable. The Dr.'s general proposition is certainly full of truth—but Hamilton College has lamentably proved an exception to it—for the years that have passed away since the Dr. stated it, have but too conclusively proved, that public opinion, in this instance, possesses the attribute of *immutability* as well as of *omnipotence*. [20]

I say not by what means Hamilton College has fallen. A share of the blame may belong to the President,—a still larger to the Board. I insist upon this only—that time has abundantly proved it can never rise, but under the auspices and application of other hands.

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[19] See Mr. S.'s observation to me only about fourteen months before (Nar. p. 75, note 68,)—*I am now convinced you ought not to resign your office, as it respects either the College or yourself; and on no conditions will I consent to it.* How very soon, it seems, his *own* mind, too, had become *sick and weary*.

[20] Could Mr. S. say that *years* had passed away (a very long period, as his language implies) from the time of the Dr.'s remark, August, 1827, to the date of his communication, March, 1829? And would Mr. S. regard it as *conclusively* proved that public opinion is *immutable* as well as *omnipotent*, because not changed within such a period (eighteen months only) and in *such* circumstances too? Verily, Mr. S.'s logic, as well as memory, must have been strangely affected.

I used to say, that if the Board would but exercise confidence in the President, and cordially co-operate with him in advancing the interests of the College, their work would not be in vain. But I would not say so now. Things have come to such a pass that the public would obstinately refuse to take any hope from such an attempted co-operation. They would look for no beneficial fruits from it. It was given out last September that a reconciliation had taken place between the President and the Board [21]—and the public had large promises made to them of the cordial co-operation of the two in their future efforts to revive the College—but the fact that you have scarcely students enough to disturb the silence of your empty buildings, pronounces the futility of your conjoint endeavors to win public favor to the College. In vain has proved your appointment, at that time, of a very able man for your Professor of Mathematics; and of another, perhaps equally able, for your Professor of Languages. (But why were these appointments *in vain?* Could Mr. S. have been ignorant that Mr. Lathrop had but four weeks before declined an appointment to the same office, and that Mr. Axtell subsequently declined his appointment? And that the principal, if not sole reason, given by these gentlemen for declining was want of harmony in the Board?) In vain has it proved that your secretary then announced to the public the *new-manning* and new-rigging of the vessel. But *how* was it announced? (See note 83, p. 101.) It was in vain to attempt to awaken hopes of her making a successful voyage so long as she continued under the old commander. [22]

But before we talk of regaining the public confidence by means of a cordial union of the President and Board, let us, in view of what has passed, frankly acknowledge the strong impracticability of a union ever taking place. A few such facts as the following show that it cannot.

1. The Board have *unanimously* resolved that the interests of the College demand the resignation of the President. [23]

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[21] It would seem there was no want of harmony in the Board itself—they were *all* opposed to the President. Such a report was with great pains circulated on every side.

[22] What does Mr. S. mean by the *large promises* of the cordial co-operation of the Board and President in their future efforts? How, and when, and where, and by whom were these *large promises* made to the public? And what does he mean by his *new-manning* and *new-rigging* of the vessel! Will he say a single inch of rope or yard of canvass was added to her rigging? or a single officer or hand put on board to aid in managing the vessel? Would it not be matter of wonder, had a SUCCESSFUL *voyage* been made in such circumstances under *any* commander? (See meetings of the Board in September, pp. 87, 88, 99.) Now, to lay aside his figure, how could Mr. S., or any man, in his sober senses, regard it less than miraculous, had there been any considerable accession to the College within *six months* after such extraordinary and unexampled proceedings of the Board of Trustees? Mr. S. must indeed have been laboring under the influence of some singular hallucination.

[23] No such resolution was ever passed *unanimously* by the Board, save in the creative imagination of Mr. Smith.

2. *Members* of the Board have told Dr. Davis, in my hearing, that he is in their judgment unfit for his place, and that while he persists in holding it, they can do nothing—they have no encouragement to do any thing—to revive the College. [24]

3. For *several* years, the President has been spending no little breath in charging the downfall of the College on the Board—and in all this time, the Board—or at least many members of the Board, —have as freely charged it on him. [25]

I might, if it were necessary, enumerate many more facts to show that the Board and the Pres. have, in their official capacity, long since parted for ever.

It is but the form of their first connection that now remains. Should I enter upon the proposed trust, it would be with the purpose of uniting my own spirited and persevering endeavors with such endeavors on the part of the Board to raise our beloved Hamilton into the very first rank of American Colleges.

But how could I flatter myself with the expectation of such indispensable aid from the Board, so long as we were not rid of what, in their repeated judgment, is a fatal objection to the prosperity of the College?

It is surely not enough for me to know that the Board is friendly to the College. I am already persuaded that every member of it is so.

But before I come under this heavy responsibility I must see that there are no obstacles in the way of the prosperity of the College, which the Board will regard as insuperable, and which will, of course, deter them from putting forth such efforts in behalf of the College as will correspond with the friendship they feel for it. Let Dr. Davis continue to be the Pres. of the College, and I would place no reliance on the aid of the Board;—for they could not give me their aid against all their convictions of the uselessness of my efforts under this incumbrance.

From views of his duty, which, sincere as no doubt they are, I must still think to be mistaken, Dr. Davis will probably refuse to retire from office. He remains there, as he says, for self-vindication. There, where he has become unpopular, does he choose to remain to conquer public opinion. [26]

If I may be permitted to speak so freely of a man for whom I am bound to feel the greatest respect, I would say that Pres. Davis's mind labours under two great errors in this matter. 1st. He has no right as a man—much less as a Christian—to weigh

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[24] With the exception of Mr. Coe, *no* member has shown such a want of the gentleman (not to say of the Christian) as to tell me so to my face, or to say so in my presence. See Nar. note 70, p. 83.

[25] Now Mr. S., I am confident, will not say that I ever charged the downfall of the College to the Board, previously to the bursting of the storm of persecution upon me, Aug. 1827; nineteen months only prior to his assertion. And had *several years* elapsed *in all this time?*—A long period *again*, as it seemed to Mr. Smith.

[26] Strange that Mr. S. did not recollect, that I uniformly declared before the Board that I remained for the *salvation* of the College, as well as for *self-vindication.*

himself, his private grievances and private interests against the College and all those great public objects which suffer so deeply for the revival of the College, and which must continue to suffer until he makes room for its revival. 2d. If public opinion is made up of individual opinions similar to my own, then Pres. Davis surely will not improve in it by refusing to give up his office, but he will continue to sink lower and lower in it, and to exhibit stronger and stronger proofs of his selfish recklessness of the public good. [27]

No doubt, we all agree, that Pres. Davis, in the very act of voluntarily retiring to private life, will do much towards awakening in the public mind a tender interest towards him—and there too he would have leisure, if so disposed to employ it, to collect his testimony and frame his argument for convincing the world, that the downfall of Hamilton College is chargeable on the Corporation and not on himself. [28]

I add no more—yourself and the other gentlemen composing the committee can, no doubt, readily determine, whether it is worth while to assemble the Board to consider this communication. I scarcely need say to one of such characteristic promptitude as yourself, that no time should be lost in getting to the close of this business.

With great respect and sincere friendship, yours,
GERRIT SMITH.

The above communication from Mr. S. was presented by the committee to the Board, at their semi-annual meeting in May. And without any observations touching its character, or the expediency or inexpediency of accepting the proposition, it was instantly and unanimously rejected.

As to the wisdom of Mr. Smith's plan, I shall say nothing:—but I must say that I not a little regret for his sake—if I may borrow his own language—that he has *exhibited* in the course of his statements so many, and as he proceeds, *stronger* and *stronger proofs* of his *utter recklessness* of facts. Yet I will not say it was *selfish recklessness*. But of whatever of unkindness or harshness his communication may appear to savour, I can most cheerfully forgive him,—confident, as I am, had he been *fully* apprized of the views and motives of my opposers, of the circumstances and dangers of the College, and of my own views and purposes, that his feelings and language, in some respects at least, would have been different. If I know my own heart, I am still the friend of

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[27] Is it possible that Mr. S. could conceive himself *bound* to feel the *greatest* respect for one who was sinking *lower and lower in public opinion*, and exhibiting *stronger and stronger proofs of his selfish recklessness of the public good?* and must not Mr. S. *as a man*, much more *as a Christian*, take pleasure in finding that *public opinion* was not *altogether* made up of individual opinions *similar* to his own?

[28] I thank Mr. S. for his suggestion. But I have found *leisure* to follow it, without relinquishing the cares of my office, which he *so kindly* recommended.

Mr. Smith. I still claim him as my friend—and I acknowledge with pleasure that I have recently received from him *substantial* proof of his friendship for the College.

As circumstances now are, I cannot refrain from adverting once more, for a few moments, to the treatment received from the reformers. Several years have passed away since the Narrative was printed; but I see no reason, from any thing that has taken place during all this time, to change the opinion then entertained of their motives and conduct; nor of the course which I had myself pursued. I am informed—and in a manner not to be doubted—that some of them have since acknowledged that 'they had done *wrong;* though they *thought* they were doing *right?*' But no such acknowledgment has been made to me.

In all the painful circumstances of my unprecedented trial there is nothing besides, as I have repeatedly remarked from its commencement, which has so deeply affected me, as the manner in which I have been treated by some of my brethren in the ministry. Hard indeed is it to be so treated by those whom we have loved and respected; who with us have professed to embrace the same system of religious faith; to be governed by the same principles of action, and to be willing to treat others as they themselves would be treated. With no common solicitude have I inquired for a cause of their conduct towards me, more honourable to their characters, and less wounding to my feelings, than the cause suggested in the Narrative. It is with grief I say, that after all I have seen and heard, I find myself constrained *still* to believe, that their unwearied efforts to remove me from my office can be ascribed to no other cause. (See Narrative, note 31, p. 31.) Never, I am persuaded, had I regarded the *new measures* as they did, should I have experienced their opposition; nor would the friends of Hamilton College have endured the pain of seeing their beloved Institution precipitated, as in a moment, to the verge of ruin.

It is evident from facts disclosed in the Narrative, that the embarrassments under which the Institution had been suffering, antecedent to the introduction of the *new measures* into the region around it (1826,) are not to be laid to the charge of these brethren; and that *they* were not the authors, nor the leaders of the enterprise to drive away its faculty and to give it a new organization. But it is equally evident that, had not *their* hearty co-operation been expected, with undoubting assurance, the enterprise never would have been undertaken; and it is morally certain that without *them* a majority of the Board of Trustees would not have been found against me. These brethren, if they have conceived they have injured me, have all had opportunity to acknowledge the wrong they have done. But with the exception of Mr. Coe, no one has done so much as to acknowledge that '*perhaps* he had acted imprudently.' They cannot complain of a want of frankness and candor on my part;—that the reasons by which I was prevented from going with them into the use of the *new measures* have been withheld from them. Had they avowed in a manner

equally explicit what I cannot but believe was the main ground of their opposition to me, the feelings experienced in the review of this subject, painful as they still must have been, would have been much alleviated.

About the last of April, 1827, I accidentally fell in company with a number of the members of the Presbytery of Oneida; among whom were Messrs. Frost, Aikin and Coe. They had but just come together, as I understood. Soon after I had entered the room where they were, Mr. Frost remarked, 'It is very *providential* that so many brethren have *happened* here at this time. I have received a letter from Brother F., and I want your advice in relation to it.' (Mr. F. was then in New-Lebanon.) Mr. F. observed in his letter that the power and grace of God were wonderfully displayed in that place under his preaching—that the inhabitants from the neighbouring towns were flocking to his meetings, and were urging him to visit the places of their residence; but that their ministers did not come near him, and that, unless invited by them, he could not visit their churches—that the letters of Dr. Beecher and Mr. Nettleton were circulated all around him, and creating such prejudices that he found himself completely hedged in, and knew not what to do. In view of these embarrassments, Mr. F. requested Mr. Frost to call some of his brethren together, and to pray over the matter, and take counsel together; and, he added, should they deem it advisable to print those letters with strictures upon them, that the people of Troy, he presumed, would be willing to be at the expense. Such was the substance of the letter, if not expressed in precisely the same words.

As I was the only man present not in favor of the *new measures*, I thought it prudent to remain silent, till my opinion should be requested.

After much had been said,—some expressing doubts and fears as to the measure suggested, others giving it as decidedly their opinion that the measure was imperiously called for, and that it was their duty '*to crush at once the opposition to the great work which God was carrying on, by exposing to the world the origin of that opposition, and the means used to strengthen it*,'—Mr. Frost turned to me and said, 'Dr. D., what do you think of the matter?' I replied, I am willing, Brethren, to give you my opinion; but I wish to make a few preliminary remarks. I then observed that they were all aware of the ground on which I stood, in relation to the *Oneida Revival*, as it had been called,—that in the course of my life I had, in the providence of God, been favored with the privilege of witnessing many precious seasons of refreshing from the Holy Spirit in our churches, but more of such seasons in colleges with which I had been connected; and that, if I was not deceived, I had taken pleasure in those seasons, and rejoiced in the displays of the riches of God's grace. But never before, said I, have I had such a trial, Brethren, as I have recently experienced, or found myself, as to the path of duty, in such doubt and perplexity.

I remarked, that I doubted not that God, *in very deed*, was in the midst of us; nor that souls were connected unto Him; but that I

saw, as I thought, a spirit awakened among us, which savoured not of Christ,—that many professing to be Christians, and believing, as I did not question, they were doing God service, filled me, by their conduct, with painful apprehensions that "they knew not what manner of spirit they were of." I observed that there were prominent features of the *Oneida Revival* which deeply alarmed me from its beginning,—that they (some one or more of those brethren, as could not be doubted) were saying in the Western Recorder, and endeavoring to convince the public, that it was *just such a work* as was experienced in New-England about the middle of the last century,—that, judging from information received from eye and ear witnesses, and derived from the Narrative of President Edwards, I must acknowledge that I was unable to see that it *was not such* a work: [28] that with this opinion, deliberately formed from a knowledge of the past, and deeply settled in my mind, I could not but believe, since man, both as to his physical and moral nature, is the same in all ages; has the same passions, affections, and infirmities, and is governed by the same laws and propensities, that the consequences of this revival must be much the same as those of the revival of the last century.

It was not to be doubted, I observed, that the power of the Holy Spirit was, in a signal manner, shed abroad in the land at that period; nor that souls, in great numbers, were born of God; notwithstanding all the wildfire, and disorders, and distractions which prevailed,—but that I must believe had they (my brethren present) been as well acquainted with that work, in all its bearings on the interests of Zion, as I was, or had as carefully adverted to them, that the course they had recently pursued (and which, in fact, they were still pursuing) would have been different; and that many things which they had encouraged would have given them alarm.

I spoke of the dissensions, the distractions, and the censoriousness witnessed at that time; of the convulsions of the churches; and stated—as should be known and remembered by all—that great numbers who could not walk with their brethren because backsliders or hypocrites, or cold and stupid, and dead as they were denominated, separated from their communion, organized churches of their own, and placed over them, by lay-ordination, pastors, with blazing and burning zeal it is true, but without knowledge,—that God did not own those churches, and that long since they were in desolation. I added, that New-England was accursed with a moral dearth after that period for nearly half a century,—that the Spirit of God seems to have taken his flight from her, as if grieved with the men of that generation,—and

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[28] I was born in the age bordering on that of Davenport, and in Suffolk county on L. I., where he was settled in the ministry, and where his career of wildness was commenced and thoroughly known. Often in my childhood and youth have I listened to narrations from my parents and others of the extravagances and excesses of which they had been witnesses; and heard the tearful regrets and lamentations of fathers and mothers in Israel at the recollection of the wildfire and convulsions of those times.

that nothing like a general revival of religion was experienced by the churches, in that *since* highly-favored region, till they were sleeping in their graves. With these facts deeply engraven on my memory, and with such an opinion entertained of the character of the Oneida Revival, and with such fears as to its consequences, can you think it strange, Brethren, said I, that I have not been able to feel, and think, and talk, and pray as you have?

Now, as to the question about printing those letters *with strictures*,—I advise you by no means to do it. Rely upon it, the authors of them would reply; they are not men to be intimidated, to shrink back from the field of controversy, if deemed their duty to take it.

And the controversy once begun, God only can tell when it would end; and the enemies of religion would all be rejoicing at the strife between the good men of the East and the good men of the West. And it would not be surprising should men be sent into this region, to procure affidavits in proof of what those gentlemen have said. And you know as well as I do,—and the truth is not to be concealed,—that there is not a single excess or act of disorder, which those brethren apprehend we have run into, which cannot be fully proved to have existed somewhere among us. I do not say that Mr. F. or you have been guilty of them; nor that he or you would approve of them. But certain it is that illiterate, overheated, and rash young men (and some old ones too, it might have been added,) who have attempted to make him their model, have been guilty of them.

I must say to you, Brethren, that printing those letters *with strictures* upon them, is, in my judgment, the last thing you ought to think of doing.

Not one of the gentlemen present,—remarkable as it may seem, judging from their preceding and subsequent course,—called in question the statements made, nor expressed the slightest doubt as to the correctness of my opinion relating to the character and tendency of the Oneida Revival, nor as to the grounds of my alarm.

Such, at its commencement, were my fears as to the results of this revival, and the reasons which prevented me from uniting with these brethren in adopting the *new measures*. And for not uniting with them, as I believe, such has been the irrepressible desire, such, as related in the Narrative, the constant efforts of these same brethren, to impair what little of character or of influence I may have acquired, during a laborious life, in a public service, by removing me from my office, in circumstances which, they well knew, must impress the community with the belief that the rapid decline and well-nigh desolate state of Hamilton College were owing mainly, if not *solely*, to the incompetency or superannuation of its President.

These gentlemen continue still to declare (I say it not without pain) that they have never wished to detach me from the College on account of my not being in favour of the *new measures*, but because, in some way or other, I had become so unpopular that it could not be sustained under me.

But was such the fact, if these gentlemen's own concessions may be believed, when the *new measures* were introduced into Clinton, in the summer of 1826?—Does not Mr. Frost acknowledge, that antecedent to commencement, August, 1826, I *stood high?* Does not Mr. Aikin say, that, previous to that time, he was *confident* he had heard nothing against me? (See Nar. note p. 89, 90.) Whence, then, so soon after this time, their unceasing solicitude for my removal, as a *sine qua non* to the salvation of the College? Can a man, standing as they acknowledge I then stood, sink so suddenly, and *so very low*, without the commission of some heinous crime? Granting that I *had*,—almost in an instant, as it would seem,—become *so very unpopular*. Then I would ask, who made me so? and by what means? and for what end? As to the question, Who *said* I was so? the Narrative may answer it. If the conduct of these gentlemen is not to be ascribed to the motive to which I have ascribed it, for one I must declare, that I see no possible way of accounting for it; supposing them to be governed by the common known laws of our nature.

Now, I ask not the Christian reader, whether these gentlemen, or myself, have conducted, in this matter, most in accordance with the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, which we profess to have embraced as our guide; but how far the difficulties of Hamilton College, since 1826, should be laid to their charge or to mine, I would ask every reader of common sense to determine for himself.

THE PROGRESS *of the College, since the commencement of its revival* (*August* 1829) *with the closing remarks.* During the darkest period of its struggle—as already stated—viz.

1828–29,	there were admitted		6,	whole number,		9,	graduated,		0
1829–30	-	-	32	-	-	38	-	-	0
1830–31	-	-	49	-	-	77	-	-	9
1831–32	-	-	43	-	-	93	-	-	11
1832–33	up to April 18th,		37	-	-	93, to be graduated			23

The greatest number ever admitted during any year previous to its decline (one year excepted) was 44;—and the greatest number on its annual catalogue previous to that time was 110; but 17 only greater than its present number. (See Nar. p. 112.) From facts stated, it is evident that the design of *reforming* the College was conceived in Oneida county—that here it was brought forth to light—that here steps were first taken to carry it into effect—that here were first heard the rumors of the *dotage* of the President, the dissatisfaction of the scholars, the necessity of a change of officers, &c.,—that here, the reformers in the Board of Trustees, and their coadjutors out of it were the most clamorous and invective, (see Nar. note 27, p. 25)—and that here, of course, the tide of public sentiment and feeling against the faculty was the deepest and strongest, and the most difficult to be counteracted. What the state of this sentiment and feeling is at present, in this

county, may be understood from the following facts. Previous to 1827, as our printed documents show, there never were in the College, at any time, more than 29 young gentlemen from this county; nor more than 6 from Utica. There are now on our docket 48 from Oneida county, and 14 from the city of Utica. These facts call for no comment.

The revival of Ham. Coll. was as unlooked for by the public—no one will deny—as was its decline. And here I would ask,—if such was its situation in Aug. 1827, when, comparatively, there was little prejudice against it in the public mind—when $4000 had recently been subscribed for the Divinity Professorship, and there was no reason to doubt that the amount necessary for the purpose might soon be obtained—when there were 90 scholars on its catalogue and a President, three professors, and two tutors in office,—if such *in fact* was the situation of the College at that time, that it *could not* be sustained, as the reformers earnestly contended before the Board, and that it could not be *worse off*, as some of them published abroad,—now I ask these gentlemen to tell me by what means—provided their declarations were true—the friends of the College in the Board, who obtained their ascendency in May, 1829, have been able to arrest its downward progress, and to raise it, so soon, from a state *then* bordering on absolute desolation, to its present standing? At that period (May, 1829) in consequence of the measures of the reformers, as already seen, there were but nine solitary young men within its walls, with a President and one tutor. The reformers during the two preceding years had been loudly proclaiming everywhere, and were still so proclaiming, that the Institution never could rise without an entire change in the faculty—*without a new President*—and that it would be utterly in vain, without such a change, to attempt to raise it. The well-wishers to the College were disheartened: a deep and sullen despondency had settled upon the public mind: such was the disaffection, by reason of the unlooked for and mysterious state of the Institution, that multitudes who had been its zealous patrons seemed not to care—(and many of them declared to me that they did not care)—whether it became extinct or not. "*Facilis decensus . . . . . sed revocare gradum*," &c.—By what means will the reformers say this great and sudden change has been effected?—a change in *such* circumstances too—according to their often and openly reiterated declaration—*utterly impossible*. If these gentlemen, as the College was in 1827, could not sustain it with the vigorous co-operation of *all* the Board of Trustees, how will they account for its resurrection from its appalling condition in 1829? to which *their* measures had reduced it,—a resurrection effected *too*, not only without *their* co-operation, but—as they cannot deny—with their open and determined opposition.

Will they say its resurrection is owing to the fact that *their* measures had made the President more *known* to the public—that they had rendered him *more popular?*—Or to the superior talents and experience of the present, in comparison with the former faculty? Highly respectable as the present professors are justly acknowledged to be, this, I trust, the reformers will not presume

to say. Will they then have the frankness and magnanimity to own that the resuscitation and present condition of this Institution are to be ascribed to the judicious measures and vigorous and united efforts of the friends of the College—the majority of the *present* Board of Trustees?—To measures which they had not wisdom to conceive, public spirit to adopt, nor energy to execute?

If they will not acknowledge this, to *what* cause will they permit us to ascribe its present state and prospects?

The facts are before the reader,—I leave him to judge for himself, who ought to be held responsible by the public for the downfall of Hamilton College: and whether the previous measures of the Board, and the steps commenced by the reformers in 1827, to save it, as was declared, from the *ruin* then said by them to await it, and pursued with such self-denying and untiring zeal till 1829 (and subsequently by those of them still remaining in the Board) are reconcileable with the duties which they owed to the community; and with the characters of wise and faithful public guardians of the interests of learning.

Of this long-agitated and trying subject, which has been a source of surprise and regret to thousands, as well as of unexampled perplexities and solicitude to myself, I now take my final leave. My public labors in the service of literature and science are closed. Yesterday witnessed the performance of my last duties as the head of Hamilton College. My age and infirmities have not recently induced me, for the first time, to wish for the repose and tranquillity of private life. Whether I should have yielded to this inducement, or not, at an earlier period, it is for others to judge. But if I have erred, I retire with the consciousness of having retained my office no longer than my duty appeared to me imperiously to demand: and with the hope also that I have not labored to sustain the College *in vain*, nor resisted the efforts, nor endured the revilings of my opposers *for naught*. [29]

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[29] In the opinion of those not apprized of my trials, it would argue a want of delicacy of feeling in being willing to lay before the public the following communications, and probably much other matter found on these pages.

But by the impartial and unprejudiced, who have full knowledge of the peculiar and trying situation in which I have been placed, no such opinion, I trust, will be entertained. In their view, the circumstances of the case, I am led to believe, will be regarded as a sufficient apology. It had long been my purpose, as many of my friends know, to resign my office at the age of sixty, if spared till that time. (See Nar. note 36, p. 44.) This purpose is alluded to in the following report of the committee as *a principle maturely formed*. Had I been permitted, in the providence of God, to arrive at this period *unmolested*, I should some time since, I trust, have been reposing in the shade of retirement.

"*To the Trustees of Hamilton College.*

GENTLEMEN,

I hereby resign into the hands of your honorable body the office which I have long held under you, as the President of Hamilton College. Be pleased to accept the assurances of my unfeigned respect, and my grateful

The welfare of an Institution over which I have long presided, and for which, in the righteous but inscrutable providence of God, I have been called to no ordinary sacrifices and sufferings, I shall ever regard with deep and peculiar interest: and most devoutly, and with no common emotions, do I commend it to the protection of Almighty God, to the fervent prayers of his people, and to the generous regard and patronage of all who feel a concern for he cause of sound religion and science.

I cannot forbear saying to my friends, in conclusion, that while memory lasts, I shall never cease to cherish, with the warmest feelings of gratitude, the recollection of the many expressions of kindness and sympathy experienced from them during the gloomy season of my trials, nor of their cordial and efficient aid, in the efforts to raise this afflicted Seminary from its depression, and to win back the confidence and favor of the public.

HENRY DAVIS.

Clinton, 18*th April*, 1833.

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acknowledgment of the many expressions of regard received from you, and of your cordial and vigorous co-operation in our exertions to sustain and advance the interests of this Seminary. H. DAVIS.

Hamilton College, Aug. 22, 1832."

"*To the Board of Trustees of Hamilton College.*

The Committee appointed on the communication of the President respectfully report—

That they consider the subject before them deeply interesting, not only to the Institution committed to our trust, but to the cause of literature in general. The separation of an able and experienced character from the Presidency of a College leaves a vacancy not easly supplied; and though our respected President has repeatedly communicated to the different members of this Board his opinion which led to this result, the difficulty of supplying his place is not diminished. Seeing his resignation is founded on a principle maturely formed in his own mind, it is the duty of the Board to accept it.

The committee would therefore recommend the following resolution to the Board:—

Resolved, That while the Board feel a grateful recollection of the faithful and successful labors of President Davis in this College, and would hereby devoutly acknowledge the kindness of Almighty God in providing it with such a head, and building up the Institution by his vigilance and care, we accept his resignation—but request him to continue his relation to the College until the induction of his successor into office—and we affectionately tender him our respect and esteem, and fervently pray that his usefulness and comfort may be protracted, and that his decline of life may be happy as its vigor has been efficient and useful.

[Signed] ANDREW YATES, *Chairman.*

Hamilton College, Aug. 22, 1832.

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ERRATA.

Page 5, Introduction, line 30, for "pleasant," read "salutary."
" 28, Narrative, " 20, for "committee," read "conviction."
" 32, " " 22, for "lasting evil," read "no lasting evil."
" 89, " " 13, note, for "declarations," read "declaration."
" 116, " " 45, text, for "rigorously," read "vigorously."